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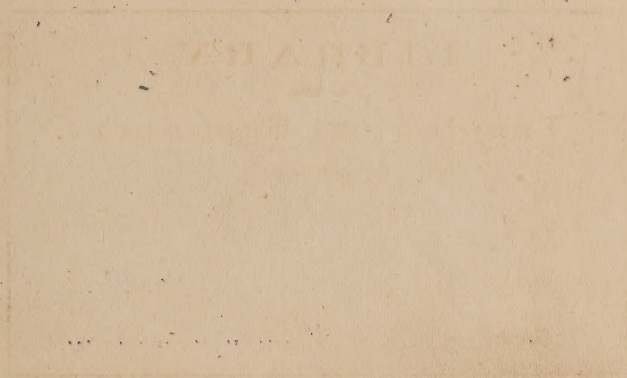
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AN  
ILLUSTRATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINES  
OF  
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION,  
WITH RESPECT TO  
FAITH AND PRACTICE.  
UPON THE PLAN OF  
THE ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM,  
*Comprehending a complete Body of Divinity.*

---

By the late Rev. and Learned  
MR. THOMAS BOSTON,  
*Minister of the Gospel at Ettrick; Author of the Fourfold State,  
A View of the Covenants, &c.*

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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Hold fast the form of sound words.—2 Tim. i. 13.

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AN  
ILLUSTRATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINES  
OF THE  
*CHRISTIAN RELIGION.*



OF CHRIST'S PRIESTLY OFFICE.

HEBREWS vii. 17.—*Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

**I**T is evident from the context, that the apostle is speaking of Christ as a Priest, applying to him this passage taken from Psal. cx. 4. *Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* Where two things are proposed; 1. That he is indeed *a Priest*, whose business it is to offer sacrifices. 2. That he is so *after the order of Melchisedec*; noting thereby the similitude betwixt the two, the one being a notable type of the other. This likeness consists not in an unbloody sacrifice, that of bread and wine, which Melchisedec brought forth to Abraham when he returned from the slaughter of the kings who had taken Sodom and Gomorrah; but, (1.) In the name, Christ being the true ‘King of righteousness,’ and ‘King of peace,’ in which respect Melchisedec was only a type of him, Heb. vii. 2. (2.) In their original; ver. 3. Melchisedec is represented as ‘without father, without mother, without descent, having no beginning of days;’ nothing being recorded of his birth and parentage, he is like an immortal. In this he was a notable type of Christ, who had no father as man, no mother as God, was God himself from eternity, and his goings forth were of old, from everlasting. (3.) In their continuance, because Melchisedec’s death is no where recorded, ver. 8.; but is represented as one who liveth. So Christ our High Priest liveth for ever, to



make intercession for us. (4.) In their office, Melchisedec was priest of the most high God, and King of Salem, or Jerusalem. So Christ is a Priest, who offered himself a sacrifice to God, and he is constituted King of Zion, of the church. (5.) In respect of unity. Melchisedec is set forth as having neither predecessor nor successor in his office. So Christ was set up to be a priest from everlasting, and is represented as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and the sacrifice that he offered being perfect, there is no more occasion for any other priests; and he has no successor, having an unchangeable and perpetual priesthood. (6.) In respect of dignity; Melchisedec being proposed as greater than Abraham. So Christ is greater than both: for he said, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' Thus Christ is a Priest, and that for ever. In this office is contained the grand relief of poor souls distressed and perplexed with the guilt and burden of their sins. When all other remedies have been tried in vain, it is the blood of the sacrifice of Christ, sprinkled by faith upon the trembling conscience, that must cool and refresh, and sweetly compose and settle it.

The doctrine arising from the text is,

DOCT. 'Christ executeth the office of a Priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall,

I. Shew that Christ is truly and properly a Priest.

II. Explain the nature of Christ's priestly office.

III. Make some practical improvement.

I. I am to shew that Christ is truly and properly a Priest.

This is evident, if we consider, 1. That the scripture holds him forth as such, Psal. cx. 4. and Heb. v. and other places of that epistle. 2. Because he exercises the acts of the priestly office, in offering sacrifice, and praying for his people. 3. Because he was typified by such as were really priests, as all the Levitical priests, and Melchisedec.

*Quest.* Wherein did Christ's priestly office differ from the priestly office under the ceremonial law?

1. The priests under the law were priests after the order of Aaron: but Christ is a priest after the order of Melchisedec. Who this Melchisedec was, it is in vain to inquire, and cannot possibly be known; the Holy Ghost designedly con-

cealing his genealogy, beginning and ending, and descent, that so he might be a fitter type of Christ and his everlasting priesthood. He was like a man dropt from the clouds, and at last caught up again, and none knew how. It is said of him, Heb. vii. 3. that he was 'without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.' Now, Christ was a Priest after the order of this Melchisedec, not by a corporeal unction, legal ceremony, or the intervening act of a human ordination, but by a divine and heavenly institution, and immediate unction of the Spirit of life, in that extraordinary manner, whereby he was to be both King and Priest unto God, as Melchisedec was, Heb. vii. 16. He was not a Priest after the order of Aaron, because the law made nothing perfect, but was weak and unprofitable; and therefore was to be abolished, and to give place to another priesthood. Men were not to rest in it, but to be led by it to him who was to abolish it, Heb. vii. 11, 12. The ministry and promises of Christ were better than those of the law; and therefore his priesthood, which was the office of dispensing them, was to be more excellent too, Heb. viii. 6. For when the law and covenant were to be abolished, the priesthood, in which they were established, was likewise to die.

2. The priests under the law were sinful men, and therefore offered sacrifices for their own sins, as well as for the sins of the people, Heb. v. 3. But Christ was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once when he offered up himself,' Heb. vii. 26, 27. He was perfectly pure and holy, and could stand before God even in the eye of his strict justice, 'as a lamb without blemish and without spot.' Though he 'made his soul an offering for sin,' yet he 'had done no iniquity, neither was there any guile found in his mouth.' And indeed his sacrifice had done us no good, had he been tainted with the least sin.

3. The priests under the law were many, because they were mortal; death as an universal deluge was continually sweeping them off the stage. But Christ as a Priest for ever, Psal. cx. 4. Heb. vii. 23. 'This man continueth ever.'

4. The priesthood under the law was changeable; but Christ's priesthood is unchangeable. The legal dispensation was to continue only for a time. It was but like the morning-star to usher in the rising sun, which so soon as he appears in our horizon, it evanishes and shrinks away, Heb. vii. 12. God confirmed this priesthood with an oath, Psal. cx. 4. Heb. vii. 21. as well as a King. Those offices which were divided before between two families, were both united and vested in Christ; this being absolutely necessary for the discharge of his Mediatory undertaking, and for the establishment of his kingdom, which being of another kind than the kingdoms of this world, even spiritual and heavenly, therefore needed such a King as was also a minister of holy things. And the apostle tells us, Heb. vii. 24. that 'this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.'

5. The priests under the law offered many sacrifices, and of various kinds, as lambs and rams, calves and bullocks, and the blood of many beasts: but Christ offered but once, and that but one sacrifice, even the sacrifice of himself. So it is said, Heb. ix. 25, 26. 'Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place, every year with the blood of others; (for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world): but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.' And herein he excelled and far transcended all other priests, in this, that he had something of his own to offer. He had a body given him to be at his own disposal for this very end and purpose. It is said, Heb. x. 5, 7, 10. 'Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' He offered up his body, and not only his body, but his soul also was made an offering for sin, Isa. liii. 10. We had made a forfeiture both of our souls and bodies by sin. It was therefore necessary that the sacrifice of Christ should be answerable to the debt which we owed to God. And when Christ came to offer up his sacrifice he stood not only in the capacity of a Priest, but also in that of a Surety; and so his soul stood in the stead of ours, and his body in the stead of our bodies.



6. All those sacrifices that the priests offered under the law were types of the sacrifice of Christ, which he was to offer in the fulness of time, they not being sufficient in themselves to purge away sin, nor acceptable to God any further than Christ was eyed in them. But Christ's sacrifice was the thing typified by all these oblations, and is efficacious in itself for the satisfaction of justice, and the expiation of sin, Heb. x. 1, 4, 14. 'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' His sacrifice was invaluablely precious, and of infinite efficacy and virtue. And such it behoved to be: for it being offered as an expiatory sacrifice, it ought to be proportioned and equivalent, in its own intrinsic value, to all the souls and bodies that were to be redeemed by it. So that as one rich diamond is more in worth than ten thousand pebbles, or one piece of gold than many counters, so the sacrifice of Christ's soul and body is far more valuable than all the souls and bodies in the world.

7. The priest's under the law appeared before God in behalf of the people, in the temple made with hands; but Christ appeareth in heaven itself. The Levitical priests offered sacrifices and made prayers for the people in the temple; and the high priest, who was an eminent type of Christ, entered into the holy of holies, the figure of heaven, once a-year, and that not without blood. This was typical of Christ's entering into heaven itself in his people's name, to appear for them before the throne of God. Hence it is said, Heb. ix. 24. 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' 1 John ii. 1. 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'

8. The priests under the law had only the office of priesthood; but Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King.

II. Let us take a view of the nature of Christ's priesthood. The office of the priests was to offer sacrifices, and to pray for the people. Hence there are two parts of Christ's priestly office, namely, oblation of the sacrifice, and intercession.

*Of CHRIST'S OBLATION.*

One part of Christ's priestly office was the oblation of a sacrifice. Where we may consider,

1. The import of offering.
2. What was the sacrifice.
3. How often he did offer himself.
4. For whom he did so.
5. For what ends he did offer himself.
6. The efficacy of his one offering.

*First*, I am to shew what the import of offering is. It signifies the voluntariness of Christ's sufferings, Eph. v. 2. 'Christ hath given himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. He laid down his life of himself, that he might take it again. 'He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.' For,

1. Though he well knew his sufferings beforehand, and that dreadful storm of the divine wrath and indignation that was to fall upon him, and all the abuse, indignities, and torments, he was to meet with from wicked men and on the cross. yet he did not withdraw from that dreadful apparatus of a violent death when his time was come; he would not suffer his disciples, could they have done it, to rescue him from the impending danger; nay his delivering himself up to his blood-thirsty pursuers, after he had exhibited a remarkable instance of his divine power, in making them fall to the ground with a word, John xviii. 28. was an evidence, that he was nowise constrained, but a hearty volunteer in his then intended offering. The cup of his sufferings was continually before his eyes; he never declined to drink of it: nay, he was pained and straitened till he drank it to the bottom.

2. The strong cry he uttered immediately before his yielding up his soul on the cross, was an evidence there was more than a natural power attending him in that important crisis. He was no criminal in the eye of God and scripture, and could not have been put to death unless he had pleased, being the most high God, and Sovereign of men and angels, and therefore having the whole creation at his command. The strong cry he then uttered was not the effect of weakness or reluctance to part with his life, such as a criminal may be supposed to give, but rather a shout of triumph, pro-

ceeding from one who had spontaneously offered himself to such a dreadful death, testifying before God, angels, and men, his joy and exultation in having performed the arduous work he had of his own proper motion engaged to achieve.

*Secondly*, Let us consider what was the sacrifice he offered up. On this head it may not be improper to observe, that sacrifices were of two sorts.

1. Some were eucharistical, or thank-offerings in testimony of homage, subjection, duty, and service; as the dedication of the first fruits, the meat and drink offerings. By these the sacrificer acknowledged the bounty and goodness of God, and his own unworthiness to receive the least of his favours, rendered praise for mercies received, and desired the divine blessing. But Christ's sacrifice was not of this kind.

2. Some sacrifices were expiatory, for the satisfaction of justice, and the purging away of sin. The institution of this kind of sacrifices was upon a double account (1.) That man is a sinner, and therefore obnoxious to the just indignation and extreme displeasure of the holy and righteous God, and laid fairly open to all the fierceness of wrath and vengeance. (2.) That God was to be propitiated, that so he might pardon man. These truths are rooted and deeply engraven in the natural consciences of men, as appears by the pretended expiations of sin among the Heathens. But they are more clearly revealed in sacred writ. Under the law, without the effusion of blood there was no remission, to intimate unto us, that God would not forgive sin without the atonement of justice, which required the death of the offender: but it being tempered with mercy, accepted of a sacrifice in his stead.

Of this last kind was the sacrifice of Christ, which he offered for us, even a sacrifice of expiation. All this was requisite to a real and proper sacrifice, concurred in his sacrifice. As,

1. The person offering was to be a priest. It was the peculiar office of a priest under the law to offer sacrifices. So says the apostle, Heb. v. 1. 'Every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.' In like manner Christ, that he might offer this sacrifice, was called to that office, and made an High Priest in the house of God;



as appears from Heb. v, 4. 5, 6, & 10. He is called 'the Apostle and High Priest of our profession; and it is said, 'Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.'

2. There was something to be offered, and that was himself, He was the sacrifice that he offered up unto God. Our great High Priest behoved to have a sacrifice answerable to the debt that we owed to God; and the debt was the forfeiture of both soul and body to the wrath of God, and the curse of the law: and therefore our High Priest was to have a soul and body to suffer in as our Surety. 'He made his soul an offering for sin,' Isa. liii. 10. 'My soul,' says he, 'is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. A body hast thou prepared me,' Heb. x. 5. And it is said, Heb. x. 10. 'We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once. He himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' 1 Pet. ii. 24. He took upon him our nature, that he might have a proper sacrifice to offer. Christ was a sacrifice in his human nature. He suffered in his soul and body. It is to be observed, that doing or suffering belongs to the whole person. Hence the church is said to be redeemed with 'the blood of God,' Acts xx. 28. Yet the notion of a sacrifice importing suffering, and the divine nature not being capable of it, he himself was the sacrifice indeed, but not in the divine but in the human nature. Even as a murderer is said to kill a man, though he kill not the soul. Now, that he suffered in his body, appears from the history of his passion in the evangelists. And his soul-sufferings also are evident from the same history. His sufferings in his soul he himself testifies, when he says, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. These were the soul of his sufferings, and far greater than those of his body. They consisted (1.) In his being deserted of God, whereby all comfort was eclipsed from his holy soul, Psal. xxii. 1. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (2.) In the impressions of God's wrath on it, which produced that bloody sweat in the garden, by which blood transpired from his sacred body. God knew how to let him feel his wrath as our Surety; and yet was pleased with him as a Son. (3.) In the assaults of the powers of darkness and spiritual wickednesses, who assailed him with redoubled fury in that hour of darkness. The prince of this world attacked him more fiercely then than ever before.

3. There was an altar on which this sacrifice was offered: for it is the altar that sanctifieth the offering, and renders it acceptable to God, and useful to man; and that was his divine nature. 'Through the eternal Spirit,' says the apostle, 'he offered himself without spot unto God,' Heb. ix. 14. and so by his blood purgeth our consciences from dead works. For Christ as God sanctified himself as man, that so, through the virtue and merit of his sacrifice, his people might be sanctified also, John xvii. 19. There behoved to be something to add an infinite value and efficacy to the sufferings of his humanity; which could be nothing else but the divine nature. The human nature suffered, and the divine nature sanctified the humanity; and, by reason of this admirable union, and the reflection of the Divinity upon the humanity, what was done to the human nature upon the cross is ascribed to the whole person. They 'crucified the Lord of glory,' says the apostle; and, 'God purchased the church with his own blood,' It was this that made his sufferings acceptable and highly pleasing to God, whose justice was to be appeased and satisfied; and it was this that made them efficacious for man, whose happiness and commerce with God were to be restored, and his guilt removed. So that he had a human nature that served for a sacrifice, and a divine nature wherein he subsisted, from whence that sacrifice derived an infinite dignity and value. Thus Christ was a priest in his person, a sacrifice in his humanity, and the altar in his Divinity.

4. In a sacrifice the things offered were to be of God's appointment, or else it had not been an acceptable sacrifice, but will worship; and no more a sacrifice on God's account, than the cutting off a dog's neck, or offering swine's blood, as appears by the law given by Moses concerning free-will offerings, Lev. 5. So that what Christ offered was appointed and prepared by God. He prepared him a body, that he might offer it for a sacrifice. It was a living body, a body animated with a rational soul, which soul was separated from his body in the offering; and therefore he is said to 'have made his soul an offering for sin;' and that soul and body constituted his human nature. This was the sacrifice that was appointed of God for the expiation of the elect's sin. Hence says the apostle, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold;—but

with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'

5. The thing offered in sacrifice was to be destroyed. This is essential to a sacrifice. Those things that were endued with life were killed, that so they might be offered to God in sacrifice, and their blood was poured out, and the other parts of them, besides the blood were burned with fire, either wholly or in part. And thus was Christ sacrificed. His dying and bleeding on the cross, answered the killing and shedding of the blood of the Levitical sacrifices: and his sufferings (expressed by the pains of hell) were correspondent to the burning of these sacrifices. It is said, Heb. xiii. 12, 13. 'Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.' His sufferings without the gate are held forth here, as answering the burning of the sacrifices without the camp.

6. The person to whom the sacrifices were offered, was God, and he only. It was gross idolatry to offer them to any other. Hence they are called 'things pertaining to God,' Heb. v. 1. and Christ's sacrifice was thus offered up to God, Heb. ii. 17. He performed the office of a merciful and faithful High Priest in offering up himself a sacrifice to God. God was the party offended by man's sin, and whose justice behoved to be satisfied, Eph. v. 2. Here is a mystery of wonders, where one party is the party offended, the priest, and the sacrifice.

*Thirdly*, I come now to consider how often Christ did offer himself. It was only once, Heb. ix. 28. 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;' and that one and once offering fully answered the end of his offering himself: for, says the apostle, 'by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' Heb. x. 14. This was the difference, as I have observed above, between the Levitical priests and our High Priest, that they offered many sacrifices, which argued the imperfection of their ministry; but Christ only once, Heb. x. 14. just cited. As for the notion of the sacrament's being changed into a sacrifice, as the Papists pretend, there is no foundation for it: for there Christ is not offered to God, but to us; and it is no renewal of that sacrifice, but a solemn commemoration of it.



*Fourthly*, I go on to shew for whom Christ offered himself a sacrifice.

1. It was not for his own sins, for he had none ; but for the sins and transgressions of others, Dan. ix. 26. 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.' He could not suffer for any sin of his own ; for he was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.' Though he made his soul an offering for sin, yet he had done no iniquity, neither was guile found in his mouth. As the legal lambs were without blemish, so Christ was a Lamb without spot. His extraordinary and miraculous conception in the womb of a virgin was an effectual bar against original sin, and he had no actual sin in the course of his life. He was infinitely holy as God, and habitually holy as man. Every power and faculty of his soul, and every member of his body, was elevated and raised to the highest pitch of holiness. And he fulfilled all righteousness in his life, and gave complete satisfaction to all the demands of the law ; so that he needed not, as the Levitical priests, first to offer sacrifice for his own sin, and then for the sins of the people.

2. Christ did not offer up this sacrifice for the sins of fallen angels ; for there was no sacrifice appointed for them. Whenever they rebelled against their sovereign Lord and Creator, they were immediately expelled from the divine presence, and are kept in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day. Christ took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He offered up the sacrifice of himself to make an atonement for the sins of men.

3. Christ did not die a sacrifice for every man and woman in the world. It is true, there was virtue and efficacy enough in his oblation to satisfy offended justice for the sins of the whole world, yea, and of millions of worlds more ; for his blood hath infinite value, because of the infinite dignity and excellency of his person. And in this sense some divines understand those places of scripture where he is called the Saviour of the whole world. Yet the efficacy and saving virtue of his sacrifice extendeth not unto all. For,

1st. It is restricted in scripture to a certain number, called sometimes the church of God, as Acts xx. 28. 'Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,' Eph. v. 25. 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.' Sometimes they are called his sheep, as John x. 15.

'I lay down my life for my sheep.' They are also called those that were given to him by the Father, John xvii. 2. 'Thou hast given him power of all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' See also John x. 26,—29. In these places of scripture, and others that might be named, you see that Christ's death is restricted to a certain number of persons, exclusive of all others.

*2dly*, If Christ would not pray for every one in the world, then certainly he did not die for every one in particular. But so it is that he excludes the reprobate world from the benefit of his prayer, John xvii. 9. 'I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me.' Both the parts of Christ's priesthood, his offering sacrifice and his intercession, are of the same latitude and extent. We find them joined together in the scripture by an inseparable connection, Rom. viii. 34. 'It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us, 1 John ii. 1, 2. 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins.' So that Christ intercedes for all those for whom he satisfied offended justice: but he intercedes not for the whole world, but only for those whom God hath given him; and therefore he did not satisfy offended justice for all men.

*3dly*, Christ's death is an act of the highest love that ever was or can be manifested to the world. 'Greater love, says he, 'hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' And says the apostle, Rom. v. 8. 'God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Now, it is plain, and cannot be denied, that every one of Adam's posterity is not the object of Christ's dearest love: and therefore he did not lay down his life for every one of them.

*4thly*, To affirm that Christ offered up himself a sacrifice with a design and intention to save all mankind, great absurdities would follow. As,

(1.) That Christ died for many, yea for innumerable multitudes, who never heard of his blessed name, nor of the blessings and benefits which were purchased by his death.—But this runs cross to the strain and current of the scripture, which tells us plainly, that there can be no salvation but by

faith in Christ; and that without hearing of him there can be no faith, Rom. x. 14, 15, 16.

(2.) If Christ died for all, then this absurdity would follow, that he died for those whom he knew to be children of wrath and sons of perdition, whom God had passed by, and left to perish eternally in that miserable condition into which they had plunged themselves by sin.

(3.) If Christ died for all men, then he died for those who are now roaring in hell, and scorched and tormented with unquenchable fire, without any hope of redemption; and so he bare the punishment of their sins, and they are also now bearing and shall bear it for ever themselves.

(4.) If Christ died with an intention to save all men, then he is an imperfect and incomplete Saviour, who hath satisfied offended justice for their sins, and purchased redemption by his blood, but cannot apply it. He is only a true Saviour of those who are actually saved, and obtain salvation by him.

(5.) If Christ died for all men, then he died in vain for the most part, and his death and sacrifice had little effect; for the generality of men and women will perish eternally. There are many nations in the world that never heard of Christ; and even where the gospel is preached, our Saviour tells us, that 'wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many go in thereat; but that strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, Mat. vii. 12, 13. 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' So that Christ did not offer up the sacrifice of himself for every one in particular.

4. Christ died for the elect, and for all the elect, and none else. God designed to save some of the lost posterity of Adam, for the manifestation of the glory of the exceeding riches of his grace; and Christ died for all these, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. Compare the following scriptures, Acts xiii. 48. Rom. iv. 25. and v. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. 1 Pet. ii. 21, 24. &c. from which we may be fully convinced that Christ died only for the elect.

*Fifthly*, I come now to shew, for what ends Christ offered up himself a sacrifice. It was to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God. The grand design and intendment of this oblation was to atone, pacify, and reconcile God, by giving him a full and adequate satisfaction for the sins of the elect world. So the apostle teaches us, Col. i. 20. 'Having made



peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself,' 2 Cor. v. 19. 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,' &c. Reconciliation is the making up of that breach which sin had made between God and us, and restoring us again to the forfeited favour and friendship of Heaven. This was the design and intendment of Christ's sacrifice, Eph. ii. 16. Now, Christ's sacrifice, abundantly satisfied these ends. And therefore I proceed,

*Sixthly*, To prove that Christ gave full satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of all the elect. This is clear and evident,

1. From many texts of scripture which merit your perusal, as Eph. v. 2. Heb. vii. 26, 27. x. 14, and ix. 13, 14.

2. Christ's resurrection from the dead proves the validity and completeness of his satisfaction. As the elect's Surety, he satisfied the law in his death; and having thereby paid all their debt, he received an acquittance, and the discharge was solemnly published to the world in his resurrection. He was released from the grave, as from prison, by a public sentence; which is an undeniable argument of the validity of the payment made by him in our name. For being under such strong bands as the justice and power of God, God could never have loosed the pains of death, if his sufferings had not been fully satisfactory to God, and received and accepted by him for our discharge. And it is observable to this purpose, that the raising of Christ is ascribed to God as reconciled, Heb. xiii. 20. The divine power was not put forth in loosing the bands of death till God was pacified. Justice incensed exposed him to death, and justice appeased raised him from the dead. If he had not paid all his people's debt by sacrifice, he had been detained a prisoner for ever in the grave. But God having received full satisfaction, set him free.

3. His ascension into heaven proves the completeness and all-sufficiency of his sacrifice. If he had been excluded from the divine presence, there had been just cause to suspect, that anger had been still resting in the breast of God; but his admission into heaven is an infallible testimony that God is reconciled. Our Saviour produces this as the convincing argument by which the Holy Ghost will effectually overcome the guilty fears of men, John xvi. 10. 'He will convince the world of righteousness, because I go to my Father.' Christ in his sufferings was numbered among transgressors;

he died as a guilty person; but having overcome death, and returned to his Father again, he made the innocency of his person manifest and apparent, and shewed that a complete righteousness is acquired by his sufferings, sufficient to justify all those who shall truly accept of it.

4. The many excellent benefits which God reconciled bestows upon his people, prove the completeness of Christ's satisfaction.

(1.) Justification is a fruit of Christ's death; for the obligation of the law is made void by it, whereby the sinner was bound over to eternal wrath and punishment; Col. ii. 14. 'Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.' The terms are here used which are proper to the cancelling of a civil bond. The killing letter of the law is abolished by the blood of the cross; the nails and the spear, which pierced his sacred body, have rent it in pieces, to intimate that its condemning power is taken away. The forgiveness of sin is the chief part of our redemption, and it is ascribed to Christ's blood as the procuring cause of it, Eph. i. 7. 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.' The payment made by the Surety is a discharge of the principal debtor from the pursuit of the creditor. As Christ took away the curse from his people, being made a curse for them; so he takes away sin from his people, being made sin for them.

(2.) The death of Christ procured grace and holiness for men. We made a forfeiture of our original righteousness and sanctity, and were justly deprived of it; and till once divine justice was appeased, all influences of grace were suspended. Now, the sacrifice of Christ opened heaven, and brought down the Spirit, who is the principle and efficient cause of sanctification in men. The whole world lay in wickedness, as a dead carcase in the grave, entirely insensible of its horror and corruption. But the Holy Spirit inspired it with new life, and by a marvellous change hath caused purity to succeed corruption. It had been a great favour indeed to be delivered from the guilt of sin, that bound us over to everlasting wrath and punishment; but it had not been a perfect and complete favour, without our being delivered from the venom and filth of sin, which had infected and corrupted our whole nature. If our guilt were only removed, we had

been freed from punishment ; but without the restoration of the divine image we had not been qualified for heaven, and fitted for converse with God. It was necessary that our souls should be washed, and our faculties renewed, to put us in a capacity to serve God, and enjoy communion with him. And this is only obtained by Christ's death, Tit. ii. 14.

(3.) The receiving believers into heaven is a convincing proof of the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice. The gates of the New Jerusalem were fast shut against sinful man, when he fell from his primitive holiness and felicity. God banished him from his presence, and drove him out of paradise, his native seat, fencing it with cherubims to prevent his re-entry. But Christ hath set open these everlasting doors, that believers may enter freely in, Heb. x. 19, 20. This shews the validity of his satisfaction. For divine justice will not permit that glory and immortality, which are the privileges of innocency and righteousness, should be given to guilty and polluted criminals ; and therefore it was Christ's first and greatest work to remove the bar that excluded men from the sanctuary of felicity. Now, what stronger argument can there be, that God is infinitely pleased with what Christ has done and suffered for his people, than the taking of them into his presence to behold his glory ? The apostle sets down this order in the work of our redemption, Heb. v. 9. that ' Christ being made perfect through sufferings, became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.' In short, it is observable, that the scripture attributes to the death of Christ, not only justification, whereby we are redeemed from wrath and misery, that dreadful punishment which we deserved for sin, but such an abundant merit also, which purchases adoption for us, and all the glorious privileges of the sons of God.

From all which it is evident, that the sacrifice of Christ answered all the ends for which it was designed. It gave full satisfaction to the justice of God, and made up an everlasting peace between God and sinners.

*Quest.* What was it that rendered Christ's sacrifice so acceptable to God, and so efficacious for men ?

*Ans.* 1. The quality of his person derived an infinite value to his obedience and sufferings. He was equally God, and as truly infinite in his perfections as the Father who



was provoked by our sins. He was the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father in all things. The fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him; and he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. His person was of as great dignity and honour as the Father's was, to whom he was offered. Though there be a distinction of order among the persons of the Godhead, yet there is no priority, nor distinction of dignity. This made his sufferings of infinite and eternal value. For though his Deity was impassible, yet he that was a divine person suffered. And it is especially to be observed, that the efficacy of his blood is ascribed to the divine nature. So the apostle declareth, Col. i. 14. 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' The efficacy of the Deity mingled itself with every groan in his agony, and with every pang and cry upon the cross. And as his blood was the blood of God, as it is called, Acts xx. 28. so his groans were the groans of God, and his cries the cries of God, and therefore of infinite value. What he acted and suffered as man, was dignified and rendered efficacious by his divine nature. From this arises the infinite difference between the sacrifices of the law, and the sacrifice of Christ, both in virtue and value. This is set down by the apostle with admirable emphasis, Heb. ix. 13, 14. 'For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God; by the personal union with the Deity, great dignity was conferred upon the sufferings of the human nature.'

2. The virtue and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice flowed from the infinite holiness and purity of his person. He was holy, harmless, &c. He was as free from blemish, as he was full of the Spirit. The spotlessness of his human nature was necessary to his being a sacrifice, and the union of the divine nature was necessary to his being a valuable sacrifice. He had no sin naturally imputed, and he had no sin personally inherent. He had no sin naturally imputed, because he was not descended from Adam by ordinary generation, who introduced sin into the world, and derived it down to all his progeny. He was holy in all his offices, harmless as a priest,

faithful as a prophet, holy in his life and death; no guile was found in his mouth, nor any inordinate motions and desires in his heart. His sacrifice could not have availed us, if he had been tainted with the least sin.

3. The graces exercised in his sufferings rendered his sacrifice fragrant and acceptable to God, Phil. ii. 8. 'He became obedient unto death.' His obedience ran with a cheerful and prevalent strain through the whole course of his life. He submitted to a body, fitted to receive all those strokes of wrath that we should have endured for ever; a body made under the law, subject to the obedience and malediction of it. He delighted to do the will of God in human nature, Psal. xl. 6, 7. He came not to do his own will, but that of him who sent him. Whatever was ordered him by his Father, that he spake, did, and suffered. He cheerfully laid down his life when the hour appointed by the Father was come. It was not a simple, but an affectionate obedience: 'As the father gave me commandment, (says he), so I do,' John xiv. 31. His offering himself a sacrifice according to the will of God for our sanctification, was the most significant part of his obedience. This rendered his sacrifice highly acceptable. Again, his admirable humility is joined with his obedience, as the cause of his exaltation, which was an evidence of its fragrancy, Phil. ii. 8. That the Lord of glory should stoop so low, as to put himself in the room of sinners, eclipsing the bright lustre and splendour of his glory, and shrouding under the disguise of our infirm flesh, submitting himself to a harder piece of service, and to deeper degrees of humiliation, than ever any creature in heaven or earth was capable of; to descend from the throne of his inaccessible light, and to expose himself to the rage and fury of devils and men, without murmuring or impatience, to submit himself to an infamous death, endure the wrath of an offended God and Father, whom he infinitely loved, shed his precious blood, and descend into the grave; this was an inexpressible and inimitable act of humility, lower than which he could not stoop. Now, since humility renders men so pleasing to God, that he heaps upon them the greatest testimonies of his favours, and richly dispensed to them the doles of his grace, it must needs render the Son most acceptable to the Father in these his sufferings, and draw from him the greatest testimonies and distributions of his favours, because it was the

greatest act of humility, as well as of obedience, that could possibly be performed. Further, the high exercise of his faith, rendered his sacrifice most acceptable to God. He had not one spark of infidelity, nor any the least grain of distrust in the goodness of God, in the midst of his deepest sorrows. He suffered the torments of hell for a time, without that killing despair that preys upon the inhabitants of that dismal place. He had a working of faith under the sense of his Father's greatest displeasure and confidence in his love, while he felt the outward and inward force of his frowns. He had a faith of the acceptableness of his death for all his people, and gave clear evidence of his confidence in the promise, for a happy and glorious success, in his acting like a king, while he was hanging as a malefactor upon the cross, distributing his largesses to the poor thief, assuring him that on that very day he should be with him in paradise. Both his obedience to God in not turning his back, and his trust in God for his help and assistance, are joined together as the ground of his justification, Isa. l. 5, 7, 8. The light of his faith was to be discovered in opposition to Adam's unbelief, and his great humility in opposition to Adam's pride. By his active and passive obedience, he glorified the holiness and justice of God; by his humility, the power and sovereignty of God; and by his trust and confidence, the divine faithfulness and veracity. All which must needs render his sacrifice a sweet smelling savour to God, and efficacious for men.

4. The completeness of Christ's satisfaction is grounded on the degrees of his sufferings. There was no defect in that payment which he made. We owed a debt of blood to the law of God, and his life was offered up as a sacrifice, otherwise the law had remained in its full force and vigour, and justice had continued unsatisfied. That a divine person hath suffered the punishment that we deserved, is properly the reason of our redemption; as it is not the quality of the surety that releases the debtor out of prison, but the payment which he makes in his name. The blood of Christ shed, and offered up to God, ratifies the New Testament. In short, our Saviour, in his death, suffered the malediction of the law, even all those degrees of divine wrath and vengeance which the elect should have suffered for ever in hell; and his divine nature gave a full value, and put a high price upon the sufferings of his human nature; so that the satisfaction



proceeding from them had an intrinsic worth and value; and God, who was infinitely provoked, is thereby infinitely pleased.

5. The sacrifice of Christ was fragrant and efficacious, because of the great glory and honour which he thereby brought unto God. The glory of his Father was what he had in view, as his main scope and aim in all his actions and sufferings, and that which he also actually perfected. The glory of all the divine attributes appeared in him in its highest lustre, 2 Cor. iv. 6. They all centered in him, and shone forth in their greatest splendor, not only in his incarnation, but also and chiefly in his sacrifice. The mercy and justice of God appear in combination here, and set off one another's lustre. Mercy could not be glorified, unless justice had been satisfied; and justice had not been evidently discovered, if the tokens of divine wrath had not been seen upon Christ. Grace had never sailed to us, but in the streams of the Mediator's blood. 'Without the shedding of blood (says the apostle) there is no remission.' Divine justice had not been so fully known in the eternal groans and shrieks of a world of guilty creatures, nor could sin have appeared so odious to the holiness of God by eternal scars upon devils and men, as by a deluge of blood from the heart of this sacrifice. Without the sufferings of Christ, the glory of the divine perfections had lain in the cabinet of the divine nature without the discovery of their full beams. And though they were active in the designing of it, yet they had not been declared to men or angels, without the bringing of Christ to the altar. By the stroke upon his soul, all the glories of God flashed out to the view of the creature. All the divine perfections were glorified in the sufferings of Christ; his mercy, justice, power, and wisdom. Here the unsearchable depths of manifold wisdom were unfolded. Such a wisdom of God shined in the cross, as the angels never beheld in his face upon his throne; wisdom to cure a desperate disease, by the death of the physician; to turn the greatest evil to the greatest good; to bring forth mercy by the execution of justice, and the shedding of blood: how surprising and astonishing is this! The ultimate end and design of Christ's sacrifice was the honour of God in our redemption. Christ sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him, John viii. 50. He sought the glory of his Father in the sal-

vation of men. Now, that must needs be fragrant and acceptable to God, which accomplished the triumph of all his attributes.

*Quest.* But did not those sacrifices which were in use under the law satisfy the justice of God, and take away the sins of the people?

To this I answer in the negative. These sacrifices were but shadows by their institution, and were to have their accomplishment in some other, and therefore could make nothing perfect. See what the apostle Paul saith, who was once very zealous for them, Heb. x. 1. 4. 11. 'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.' More particularly,

1. It was against common reason, that the sin of a soul should be expiated by the blood of a beast; that the sufferings of a nature so far inferior could be a sufficient compensation for the crime of a nature so much superior to it. The prophet spake the true reason of mankind, when he asserted, that the Lord would not be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil; that he would not accept of the first-born of the body as a satisfaction for the sin of the soul, Micah vi 6. A rational sacrifice was only fit to atone for the sin of a rational being. There was no agreement between the nature of a man and that of a bullock. The nature that sinned was also to suffer, and so to bear the punishment due by the law. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' saith the Lord Ezek. xviii. 4. If God had been content with the blood of beasts for the sins of men, then there had been no sufficient discovery of the severity of his justice, the purity of his holiness, nor the grandeur of his grace. It was inconsistent with the honour and majesty of God, who had denounced a terrible curse upon all the transgressors of the law, and published it with so much dread and awful solemnity, as thunders and lightnings, fire and smoke, and terrible earthquakes, to make so light of it, as to accept of the blood of a few mangled beasts, in the room of the

offender. Would God appear upon mount Sinai with ten thousands of his angels to publish a fiery law, and let all the threatenings of it vanish into smoke? Can any in reason think, that all those fearful curses should be poured out upon a few irrational and innocent creatures, who had never broken that law? Can it ever enter into the heart of man to think, that, after so solemn and terrible a proclamation, he would acquiesce in so slight a compensation as the death of a poor beast? None can possibly entertain so mean and despicable thoughts of the infinite majesty, justice and holiness of God, or of the vile and detestable nature of sin, and the greatness of its provocation, as to imagine that the one could be contented, or the other expiated, by the blood of a lamb or a bullock. Our own consciences will tell us, that if God will have a sacrifice, it must be proportioned to the majesty, of him, whom we have offended, and to the greatness of the crime which we have committed. If all the cattle upon a thousand hills were sacrificed, and all the cedars in Lebanon were cut down for wood to burn the offering, it could not be a sweet smelling savour to God. There is an infinite disproportion between this kind of sacrifice and the glorious Majesty of Heaven.

2. The repetition of these sacrifices shews their insufficiency for the expiation of sin. For where the conscience is once purged, and the remission of sin obtained, there is no more offering for sin, as the apostle tells us, Heb. x. 18. But the repeating of the sacrifice plainly intimates, that the person for whose sake it is repeated is in the same condition now that he was in at the time of the former oblation. The apostle tells us, that if the law could have made men perfect, then these sacrifices would have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins, but in those sacrifices there was a remembrance again made of sins every year, Heb. x. 2, 3. Had the wrath of God been appeased by them, why should the fire burn perpetually upon the altar? why should it be so fed continually with the carcases of slain beasts? As often as they were offered, there was a conscience of sin excited in the presenter of them, and iniquity was called to remembrance. The whole scene of the legal administration loudly proclaimed, that the wrath of God against sin was not appeased and that the guilt of the soul was not wiped off. If



a man had presented a sacrifice for his sin one day, and fallen into the same or some other sin before night, he must have repeated his sacrifice for a new expiation. Had there been any efficacy in them to purge away sin, then they had ceased; and there would have been no repetition of them.

3. The great variety of these sacrifices shew their insufficiency to take away sin. There were many gifts and sacrifices, bulls and goats, calves and lambs; which shews that no one thing was fit to typify and represent the full expiation wrought by Christ; whereas he offered but one sacrifice, and by that perfected for ever them that are sanctified. As the application of many medicines shews their insufficiency to cure a disease, so the many sacrifices and purifications under the law, plainly evidence that a full and efficacious propitiation for sin was to be sought elsewhere. If the great annual sacrifice, which was the most solemn one in that whole institution could not effect it, much less could sacrifices of a lower dignity. It is from the repetition of this great sacrifice that the apostle argues the insufficiency of them all, Heb. x.

4. God never intended that these sacrifices should expiate sin by any virtue of their own. The great and glorious Majesty of heaven, who was offended and provoked by sin, is truly infinite; and to satisfy him the sacrifices must be infinite too. But none of those sacrifices under the law were so. Why then were they appointed? Not with any intention to purge away the sin of the soul, but the ceremonial uncleanness of the flesh, as Heb. ix. 13, 14. where you see the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh. The apostle compares these and the sacrifice of Christ together, and shews that the one purified only the flesh, and the other the conscience. It was not a moral guilt which they were intended to remove, but only a ceremonial one; as when one was defiled by touching a dead carcase or a leprous person, which was reckoned a defilement of the body, not of the soul. God hath often discovered their weakness and insufficiency, and that they could not give him recompense for the injury done him by sin. So Isa. lxvi. 1. 'Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? By the house or temple here is meant all the Jewish economy,

the whole lump of legal sacrifices. Though all these were appointed by God, and had been used by his people for a long time, yet he had no rest in them: they could neither satisfy his justice nor vindicate the honour of his law, nor could they ever take away sin, Heb. x. 11. And therefore God rejected them, and they were abolished and disannulled, for the weakness and unprofitableness of them, Heb. vii. 18. Though they had been practised by the Jews for so many ages, yet not one sin had been expiated by them in all that long tract of time.

5. The insufficiency of these sacrifices for the satisfaction of divine justice, and the expiation of sin, appears from the end and design of their institution, which was to prefigure and represent a more excellent sacrifice, that was able to do it effectually, even the great sacrifice of Christ. They were but shadows of good things to come, as the Apostle terms them, and did typically represent a crucified dying Christ as the substance: and whatever virtue they had, it was not in or from themselves, but from their typical relation to him whom they prefigured. They all pointed forth the sacrifice of Christ, by whose precious blood, shed in the fulness of time, the sins of the elect were fully expiated. God had no pleasure in these sacrifices, but only so far as they represented the sacrifice of Christ, which effectually takes away sin, Heb. x. 6, 7, 8.

From what hath been said on this head, you see that those sacrifices which were in use under the law could not satisfy the justice of God, and take away the sins of men.

*Object.* If Christ suffered for the sins of his people, then he that was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, must be accounted a guilty person, yea, even the most guilty of all others, as having charged upon him all the sins of an elect world.

*Ans.* There is a twofold guilt to be considered, namely, a culpable, and a penal guilt. He that commits the offence is under culpable guilt; and he who is obliged to suffer for the offence is under penal guilt, though he did not actually commit it. Now, Christ as our sacrifice was under this penal guilt; the offences committed by us were charged upon him; and by his voluntary undertaking to be a sacrifice for us, he came under an obligation to suffer for us, as if he had really sinned, though we only were the transgressors. This is plain.

in the case of those legal sacrifices, which were shadows of Christ. It appears from them, that these two sorts of guilt may be separated, so that he who is not culpably guilty may be penally guilty, and may justly suffer though he did not personally sin: for the sins of the people being laid upon these sacrifices, they were under penal guilt, and did justly suffer as if they had sinned; and yet they were not culpably guilty; for they neither had sinned, nor were they capable of sinning.

*Quest.* Seeing Christ offered up his sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and he himself is God, how could he die and make satisfaction to himself?

*Ans.* 1. God cannot be said properly to satisfy himself; for that would be the same thing as to pardon sin simply, without any satisfaction.

2. There is a twofold consideration of Christ, one in respect of his divine nature or essence, in which sense he is both the object against which the offence is committed, and to whom for it the satisfaction is made: and there is another consideration of Christ in respect of his person, and œconomy or office; in which sense he properly satisfied God, seeing he was, in respect of his manhood, another and inferior to God. So he says, John xiv. 28. 'My Father is greater than I.' The blood of the man Christ Jesus is the matter of the satisfaction; the divine nature dignifies it, and makes it of infinite value.

3. It is not inconsistent with reason, that the Son of God, clothed in our nature, should by his death make satisfaction to the Deity, and consequently to himself. For in the according of two different parties, a person that belongs to one of them may interpose for reconciliation, provided that he divests his own interest, and leaves it with the party from which he comes. As for instance, let us suppose two persons, a father and a son, both possessed of the supreme power, and offended by rebellious subjects: It is not inconsistent that the Son interpose as a Mediator to restore them to the favour of the prince his father. And by this he also reconciles them to himself, and procures pardon for that offence, by which his own majesty was lesed. Now, this is a fit illustration of the great work of our redemption, so far as human things can represent divine. For all the persons of the holy Trinity were equally provoked by our sin; and to obtain



our pardon, the Son, with the consent of the Father, deposits his interests in his hands, and as a Mediator intervenes between us and his Father, who in this transaction is considered as the guardian of the rights of Heaven; and having performed what divine justice required, he reconciled the world to God, i. e. to the Father, himself, and the eternal Spirit. In this case his person is the same, but his quality is different. He made satisfaction as a Mediator, and received it as God; which is no way inconsistent.

*Quest.* Seeing Christ really suffered for the sins of his people, whether did he suffer the same punishment that they deserved, and which the law threatened, or only something equivalent to it? It would seem that Christ did not suffer the same thing that the law threatened, and which we justly deserved for sin: for then he must have suffered eternal death. It was not only the first, but the second death that the law threatened. Therefore Christ's temporal death did not satisfy the law and justice of God for us.

There are very learned and pious writers on both sides of this question. Yet I humbly think, that, without any inconvenience, both may be affirmed in different respects. To clear this, you would know, that the punishment which Christ endured in our stead may be considered either as to its substance or essence, or with respect to the accidental circumstances which attend it when inflicted on the damned. Now, if we consider it as to substance or essence, it was the very same which the sinner should have undergone. Man by his fall was liable to death, and to the curse and wrath of God, and Christ hath borne this in the elect's room. But if we consider it with respect to the accidental circumstances which attend it when it is inflicted on the damned, then it was not the very same, but a punishment equivalent to it. The accidental circumstances of this punishment as inflicted on the damned, are, blasphemy, rage, and an impotent fierceness of mind, which are not appointed by the law, but are only accidentals, arising from the wickedness and perverseness of their spirits. Now, our blessed Saviour was not, nor possibly could be, liable to these. The great holiness and sanctity of his person effectually secured him against all these. Besides, the punishment that is inflicted upon the damned is eternal, and attended with final despair, and the intolerable anguish of a guilty stinging conscience. This is the never-

dying worm that gnaws upon their vitals. But Christ the Redeemer having no real guilt, was not liable to the worm of conscience ; and his temporary sufferings were equivalent to the eternal punishment of the damned, and fully satisfactory to divine justice, on account of the infinite dignity and excellency of his person ; so that he was not capable of despair.

Thus it evidently appears, that Christ offered himself a sacrifice to satisfy the justice of God offended by sin. And in order to confirm your faith in this important article, one of the fundamental doctrines of our holy religion, let me again call your attention to the following particulars, which I shall but barely mention.

1. Consider the necessity of this satisfaction. Without shedding of blood there is no remission, The justice of God, the nature of sin, and the sanction of the law, necessarily required it. And the event manifests it ; for it is not conceivable, how, if sin could have been taken away, with a bare word, the Lord would have fetched a compass by the blood of his own Son.

2. Consider the truth of it. Christ did really and truly, by the sacrifice of himself, satisfy the justice of God for us. For he bare the punishment due to our sins, Isa. liii. 5. He died for us, in our room and stead, Rom. v. 6, 7.; and not for our good only, which may be said of all the martyrs. Compare 1 Cor. i. 13. He bought us with his blood and gave himself a ransom for our souls, and so has taken away our sins in the guilt thereof. His sufferings were the sufferings of a divine person ; and so, though not infinite in duration, yet infinite in value. He was Lord of his own life.

3. Consider the perfection of it. He satisfied completely for the sins of his people. His satisfaction fully answered the demands of the justice and law of God. This is plain from the excellency of the person suffering, Col. i. 19.: this the apostle testifies, Heb. x. 14. forecited ; and from the discharge he got in his resurrection, and exaltation to the Father's right hand. Whatever is left to his people to suffer it is not to satisfy the justice of God, but for their correction, that they be made partakers of his holiness.

Having thus shewed that one end for which Christ offered up himself a sacrifice to God, was to satisfy his justice, I proceed,

SECONDLY, To shew that another end, as a native consequence of the other, was to reconcile elect sinners unto God. Here I shall,

1. Explain the nature of reconciliation.
2. Prove that reconciliation with God is the blessed fruit and effect of Christ's death.
3. Shew what influence the death of Christ has on this.

*First,* As to the nature of reconciliation, several things are implied in it. As,

1. A former friendship and favour. God and man were once in good terms. There was a time wherein they met and lovingly conversed together. When Adam dropt from the fingers of his Creator, he was the friend and favourite of Heaven. He had the law of God written on his heart, and a strong bent and inclination in his will to obey it. In that state there was no place for reconciliation: for then there was no breach between God and his creature.

2. It implies an enmity between God and man. Man fell from his primitive state of favour and friendship with Heaven, and joined issue with the devil, God's greatest enemy. Whereupon the Lord took the forfeiture of his possession, turned him out of paradise, and hindered his re-entrance by a flaming sword. There is now a dreadful war betwixt earth and heaven. Men daily rebel against God's laws, labouring to beat down his interest in the world, and employing all their powers and faculties, mercies and comforts, as weapons of unrighteousness to fight against him. And he is an enemy to them; for he hates all the workers of iniquity, and the foolish cannot stand in his sight. His wisdom, holiness, justice, and power, stand ready charged against them, and they are liable to his eternal vengeance. This is the state wherein man stands with God on the account of sin.

3. Reconciliation with God lies in his receiving rebels into favour, and issuing forth a gracious act of indemnity for all their sins, and cancelling all those bands of guilt whereby they were bound over to eternal wrath and misery. This great blessing formally consists in his 'not imputing their trespasses unto them;' 2 Cor. v. 19. The forfeiture is taken off, and they are admitted into his former friendship and favour. Now, this is twofold; fundamental and actual.—There was a foundation laid for this reconciliation in the death of Christ. This is the mean by which it was purcha-



sed, and the chief and only ground why God lays aside his anger. 'He made peace,' says the apostle, 'by the blood of his cross.' And it is actual, when the offer of reconciliation is complied with by faith. He sends forth his ambassadors, clothed with his authority, to pray them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, declaring his great willingness to receive them into favour; and when men embrace the offer of reconciliation, then God actually lays aside his anger, and imputes sin no more to them.

*Secondly*, I proceed to prove that it is only through Christ that sinners can obtain reconciliation with God. This is clear,

1. From the holy scriptures, where this great truth is expressly declared. So it is said, Acts iv. 12. 'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' And we are elsewhere told, that 'there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And he is called the Saviour of the world, not only by way of excellency, in respect of the great danger he saves us from, but by way of exclusion also, in regard of the sole designation of his person to this office, exclusive of all others. 'If ye believe not that I am he,' says he 'ye shall die in your sins,' John viii. 24. He is the only person that was designed in all the prophecies, promises, and types. He is the only Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. He is the promised seed of the woman, that was to break the serpent's head. The heart of God is fixed upon him alone, and his resolution concerning the duration of his office is immutable and unalterable. He hath summed up all the dispensations of former ages in him. Eph. i. 10. All other things were preparations to and shadows of him; God, who had various ways of communicating himself to men, hath summed up his whole will in his Son, and manifested and declared that all his transactions with men did terminate in him.

2. The truth of this doctrine will appear, that none else was ever fitted for the management of this work. God and men were to be reconciled, and none but he that was God and man in one person could be a fit day's man to lay his hand upon both. Had he been only man, he had been incapable to satisfy offended justice; and had he been only

God, he had been incapable of suffering. But being God and man, he is fitted for both. Infinite satisfaction was requisite to appease the anger of God ; for without this, guilt would have remained: and none else was capable to give it. but Christ, in regard of the infinite dignity and excellency of his person. It was upon no other person that the Spirit descended like a dove to furnish his human nature with all needful abilities for the discharge of his trust.

3. If we consider that none else ever did that for us which was necessary for our reconciliation with God. It was he that answered the demands of the law, and silenced the roarings of vindictive justice. He only filled up the gap that was between God and sinners. It was only Christ that interposed himself as a shelter between the wrath of God and the souls of men. The prophet Isaiah tells us, that 'he bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and that the chastisement of our peace was upon him.' He received into his own bowels the sword of justice that was sharpened and pointed for us. He trod the wine-press alone, and none of the people were with him. He endured the bruises of God, the darts of the devil, and the reproaches of men; and would not desist till he had laid the foundation of an everlasting peace between God and sinners.

4. If ye consider that none else was ever accepted of God but this Mediator. The legal sacrifices were not able to make the comers thereunto perfect, Heb. x. 1. They were only shadows of good things to come; Christ was the substance and complement of them all; and they were no farther regarded of God but as they were types and representations of his Son. The daily repetition of them was an undeniable evidence of their inability to affect the reconciliation of man; but the blood of Christ typified by the blood sprinkled by Moses upon the people, does it effectually. This was a sacrifice wherein God smelt a sweet savour, and was highly accepted of him.

*Thirdly*, It remains to shew you what Christ did in bringing about this reconciliation.

1. He undertook this work in the eternal transaction that was between the Father and him, as I have shewn you formerly at large.

2. He purchased reconciliation by his death, and thereby procured the egress of the divine favour to man. This was

the prime article in the covenant of grace, 'When we shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed,' Isa. liii. 10. God required this sacrifice exclusive of all others, which were entirely useless for the satisfaction of justice, though fit to prefigure the grand sacrifice that God intended. It was by the death of Christ alone that reconciliation was purchased to men, Rom, v. 10. Eph. ii. 13. and Col. i. 21. And when he was upon the cross he cried, 'It is finished;' that is, the work of redemption is accomplished, reconciliation is purchased, I have done all that was appointed for me to do, the articles on my part are now fulfilled, there remain no more deaths for me to suffer.

3. He brings about an actual reconciliation between God and sinners by virtue of his efficacious intercession, Heb. vii. 25. His advocacy in heaven is the gracious spring of all divine communications. It is by this that he deals with God in the behalf of men; he leads every believer by the hand as it were unto the gracious presence of God, bespeaking acceptance for them after this manner: 'Father, here is a poor creature that was born in sin, and hath lived in rebellion all his days; he hath broken all thy laws, and deserves all thy wrath; yet he is one of that number that thou gavest me before the world began; and I have made full payment to thy justice by my blood for all his debt; and now I have opened his eyes to see the sinfulness and misery of his condition: I have broken his heart for his rebellions against thee and bowed his will into obedience to the offer of thy grace: I have united him to me by faith, as a living member of my mystical body: and now, since he is mine by regeneration, let him also become thine by a special acceptance: since thy justice is satisfied for his sins, let thine anger also be turned away, and receive him graciously into favour.' In a word, the reconciliation of every elect person with God, is actually brought about by Christ: He opens their eyes, and lets them see their sin and danger; he beats down the stubbornness and obstinacy of their wills, and brings up their hearts to a full compliance with the offers of peace made in the gospel; and he leads them to God, and makes their persons and duties acceptable to him. Hence it is said, Eph. i. 6. 'He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.'

Before I proceed to the consideration of the second part



of Christ's priestly office, namely, his intercession. I shall make some improvement of the doctrine of his satisfaction.

1. Here we may see the horrid and hateful evil of sin, which no other sacrifice could expiate but the blood of the Son of God. As the strength of a disease is known and seen by the quality and force of the medicine that is made use of to cure it, and the virtue of a commodity by the greatness of the price that is laid down to buy it; so is the matter here. The sufferings and death of Christ express the evil of sin far above the severest judgments that ever were inflicted upon any creature. The dying groans of our blessed Redeemer set forth the horrid nature of sin, and loudly proclaim how hateful it is in the eye of an infinitely pure and holy God. How much evil must there be in sin that made Christ to groan and bleed to death to take it away! It is strange to imagine how rational agents should dare to commit such an evil, so freely and openly, and that for trifles and perishing vanities, which are of no continuance and duration. Can they escape, or can they possibly endure, the wrath and vengeance of an incensed Deity? If God spared not his own Son, when he came in the likeness of sinful flesh, how shall sinners escape, who are deeply and universally defiled? Can they encounter with the fury of the Almighty, the very apprehensions of which made Christ's soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death? Have they patience to endure and bear that for ever, which was intolerable for Christ to bear but for a few hours, who had all the strength of the Deity to support him? If it was so with the green tree, what shall become of the dry, when exposed to the fiery trial? O what prodigious madness is it for men to drink iniquity like water, as a harmless thing, when it is a poison so dangerous and deadly, that the least drop of it brings certain ruin? What desperate and monstrous folly is it to have slight apprehensions of that which is attended with the first and second death; even with all the terrors and torments of hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; where misery will continue in its full extremity, while eternity runs its endless course! Nothing but unreasonable infidelity and want of thought can make men venturous to provoke the living God, who is infinitely sensible of their sins, and who both can and will most terribly punish them for ever.

2. This lets us see the strictness and inexorable severity of

divine justice, that required satisfaction equivalent to the desert of sin. All the other demonstrations of it which God hath given to the world, are nothing to this. God spared not his own Son. The fountain of divine mercy stopt its course, and would not let out one drop to Christ in the day of his extreme sorrow and sufferings. The Father of mercies saw his dear Son sweating great drops of blood in a cold night, and crying out with a mournful accent, 'O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;' and yet he would not grant the request. O the inflexible severity of divine justice! What will ye do, sinners, when it falls upon you in hell? If the blessed Son of God cried so out, what will become of you! How will impenitent sinners roar and yell for ever under the dreadful strokes of incensed justice! O what a dreadful thing must it be to fall into the hands of the living God!

3. See here the wonderful love of Christ to poor miserable sinners, and his great desire for the salvation of their souls. His love here passeth knowledge. It infinitely transcends the reach of the most illuminated understanding. What Christ suffered from his birth to his death on the accursed tree, affords the most striking instance of his great love to poor sinners. No example of such love can be found among men. This matchless love of Christ should inflame our hearts to sing, as Rev. i. 5, 6. 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'

4. This doctrine affords us the strongest assurance that can be, that God is willing to pardon our sins, and to be reconciled to us. There is in the natural conscience of man, when opened by a piercing conviction, such a quick sense of guilt, and of God's avenging justice, that it can never have an entire confidence in his mercy till justice be atoned. From hence the convinced sinner is restlessly inquisitive how to find out the way of reconciliation with a holy and righteous God. Thus he is represented inquiring by the prophet, 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the

fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' The scripture tells us, that some consumed their children in the fire, to render their idols propitious to them: but all these means were ineffectual, their most costly sacrifices were only food for the fire; nay, instead of expiating their old sins, they committed new ones by them, and were so far from appeasing, that they inflamed the wrath of God by their cruel oblations. But in the gospel there is the most rational and easy way propounded for the satisfaction of divine justice, and the justification of man. Hence says the apostle, Rom. x. 6, 7, 9. 'The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' The apostle here sets forth the care and anxiety of an awakened conscience. He is at a loss to find out a way to escape deserved judgment: for such things as are on the surface of the earth or floating on the waters are within our view, and may easily be obtained; but those which are above our understandings to discover, or our power to obtain, are proverbially said to be in the heavens above, or in the depths beneath; and it is applied here to the different ways of justification by the law and by the gospel. The law propounds life upon an impossible condition. But the gospel clearly reveals to us, that Christ hath performed all that was necessary to our justification, and that by a true faith we shall have an interest in it. Christ's ascension into heaven is a convincing proof, that the propitiation for our sins is perfect; for otherwise he had not been received into God's sanctuary, and admitted into the sacred place. Therefore to be under anxious and perplexing inquiries how we may be justified, is to deny the value of Christ's righteousness, and the truth of his ascension. By virtue of the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ, the soul is not only freed from the fear of God's wrath, but hath a lively hope of his favour and love. This is expressed by the apostle, Heb. xii. 23. when he reckons among the privileges of believers, that they are *come to God*, &c. The apprehensions of God as the righteous Judge of the world, strike the guilty creature with dread and terror; but is sweetened by



Christ the Mediator, we may approach unto him with a humble and holy confidence.

5: We must lay hold on this sacrifice, if we would be saved. This is the only sacrifice that satisfied offended justice, and no other could do it. Therefore we must have recourse to this, if we would have peace with God. Under the law the people were to be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice; and so must we be with the blood of Christ. It is said, *Exod. xxiv. 8.* that 'Moses took the blood of the covenant, and sprinkled it on the people.' This signified the sprinkling of their consciences with the blood of Christ, and their obtaining redemption, justification, and access to God, through it alone. Hence our Saviour is described by this part of his office, *Isa. lii. 15.* 'He shall sprinkle many nations.' Our guilt cannot look upon God as a consuming fire, without a propitiatory sacrifice. All our services are lame and defective, impure and imperfect, so that they will rather provoke God's justice, than merit his mercy. We must therefore have something to put a stop to a just fury, expiate an infinite guilt, and perfume our unsavoury services, and render them acceptable to a holy and righteous God; and that is only the sacrifice of Christ. This is full of all necessary virtue to save us: but the blood of it must be sprinkled upon our souls by faith. Without this we shall remain in our sins, under the wrath of God, and exposed to the sword of divine justice; and our misery will be heightened by our having the offers of Christ and his grace. O! it is a fearful thing for men to have this sacrifice pleading against them, and this precious blood crying for vengeance from heaven upon them; as innocent Abel's blood cried to heaven for vengeance against the unnatural cruelty of his wicked and inhumane brother.

6. Hence see that God will never seek satisfaction for sin from those that are in Christ Jesus. He gave full and complete satisfaction to the law and justice of God for all the wrongs and injuries done thereto by the sins of men, the sufferer being God, and his divine nature stamping an infinite value upon them. Now, if the creditor receives full satisfaction for an offence done, or complete payment of a debt due, by a debtor, from the hands of a surety, neither law nor justice will permit him to ask any further satisfaction or payment from the principal debtor. He can raise no suit or action against the debtor, in regard he has fully satisfied him by the

action and deed of his surety. Law and justice are fully satisfied by the obedience and satisfaction of Christ substituting himself in the room of sinners, and making his soul an offering for them, so as they can crave no more: therefore there can be no condemnation to those that are in him, and have taken the benefit of his satisfaction, and present it to God, as theirs, performed in their room and stead. Hence the apostle says, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.' O seek to have your station in Christ, and so you shall be placed beyond the reach of condemnation. You may indeed, though in Christ, suffer chastisements and corrections; yet these are the corrections and chastisements of a Father, not of a Judge; and intended for your good, to cause you forsake sin, and enhance the value of the sacrifice of Christ, and not for satisfaction to justice, whose highest demands have been fully satisfied by the Surety in your room.

7. Hence see the certainty of salvation to, and that God will bestow all the benefits purchased by Christ on, those who believe. Christ has fully satisfied justice for all those whom he represented as a Mediator; so that it has nothing to demand of the Surety, nor of those whose persons he sustained in that undertaking. Hence their salvation is infallibly secured; and justice is bound to accomplish it. Mercy pleads for it; justice fully satisfied cannot dispute the validity of the claim, and cheerfully consents to their acquittal from guilt and condemnation. Thus righteousness and peace kiss each other in the absolution of the guilty sinner that believeth in Jesus.

8. Bless God for the gospel, that discovers unto us this infallible way of being delivered from condemnation and wrath, this sure way to peace and reconciliation with God, this precious balm for a troubled conscience, and this effectual remedy for appeasing an angry God. O prize the gospel, and the precious discoveries thereof, in which all blessings are contained; and accept of a slain Saviour as your only Redeemer from sin and wrath, from hell and condemnation; and glory in his cross, and what he hath done for your redemption and deliverance.

#### OF CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.

THE second part of our Lord's priestly office is his interceding for his people, viz. all those for whom he satisfied di-

vine justice. As his intercession is founded upon his making satisfaction to law and justice for their sins, and plainly supposes his having offered himself a sacrifice in their name and stead, so the objects thereof must be the same. As he died only for those for whom he intercedes, so he intercedes for none but such as he shed his precious blood for, as has been shewn in the preceding part of this discourse.

In discoursing further from this point, I shall shew,

1. The different periods of our Lord's intercession.
2. Wherein his intercession consists.
3. The necessity of it.
4. Deduce an inference or two.

*First*, We may consider the periods of our Lord's intercession. And this may be taken up in a threefold period of time wherein it was made, viz. before his incarnation, during the state of his humiliation, and now in his exalted state.

1. Christ interceded for his church and people before his manifestation in the flesh. Though this office be most eminently performed since the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ, yet it was also effectually performed by him before his assumption of our flesh. He interposed then by virtue of his engagement to make his soul an offering for sin; and he intercedes now by virtue of his actual performance of that engagement. 'As he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' so by that same reason he was an advocate pleading from the foundation of the world. It was through the merciful interposition of the Son of God, in consequence of the covenant betwixt the Father and him, that deserved vengeance came not upon the world for sin at the first commission of it. We find him in the Old Testament pleading for the church long before he assumed the human nature, Zech. i. 12. and the saints making use of Christ's name in their prayers to God long before he was born, Dan. ix. 17. Thus his intercession began in heaven thousands of years before his abode on earth.

2. He interceded for his people in his state of abasement and humiliation, Heb. i. 7. 'In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications to God with strong cries and tears.' This manner of intercession was suitable and congruous to his abased state. Though he was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;



yet his intercession was not less prevalent with God, for 'he was heard in that he feared.' Ye may see with what majesty and authority he prayed on the behalf of all the elect, John xvii. 24. 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' Yea, even when he was under the sharpest agonies, when he was bruized by God, and broken by men, groaning under the wrath of the one, and the wrongs of the other, he forgets not to put up petitions for his crucifiers, Luke xxiii. 34. 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' And many of those who imbrued their hands in his innocent blood, obtained a gracious pardon through his prevalent intercession.

3. He is pleading now for his people in heaven, in his exalted state. When he had offered up himself a sacrifice on the cross, he ascended into heaven, and entered into the most holy place, and there prosecutes the same suit that he had commenced on the earth. Hence says the apostle, Rom. viii. 34. 'It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.'

*Secondly*, I am to shew wherein Christ's intercession consists.

1. He does not plead for his people in heaven, in such a supplicatory and humble manner as he prayed for them when he was on the earth. He falls not down upon his knees with a deep prostration of soul, lifting up his eyes with tears and strong cries. Such humble prayers and supplications were suited only to the days of his flesh, when he appeared in the form of a servant, and was found in the likeness of man; but they do not become him now in his state of glory, when he is stript of all those natural infirmities and marks of indigence wherewith he was clothed in the world. But, positively,

2. His intercession lies in the following things.

1st. In his appearing in heaven in his people's nature, and on their account. After he had shed his precious blood on the earth for the expiation of their sin, he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven as their Advocate and Intercessor, that, by the virtue of his meritorious sacrifice, he might answer all the charges brought in against them,

and sue out all the good things that belonged to them, Heb. ix. 24. 'Christ' is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.'

2dly, In presenting the memorials of his death and passion as a moving plea on their account. This was typified and prefigured by the high priest's carrying the blood of the sacrifice into the most holy place, and presenting it before the Lord. He was not to go in before the mercy-seat without it; and there was no interceding but by virtue of it. So the whole power and efficacy of Christ's intercession is founded upon his meritorious sufferings. His soul that was bruised and made an offering for sin, and his body that was wounded and broken upon the cross, are daily presented before God, and will remain in the divine presence for ever, as an eternal memorial of his bloody sufferings. This has a powerful efficacy in prevailing with God. Hence, by an usual figure, an interceding voice is attributed to his blood, Heb. xii. 24. 'It speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Christ's blood speaks, though not vocally and with oral expressions, yet powerfully and efficaciously. It speaks in the same manner that Abel's blood did, though not for the same end; this cried for vengeance upon wicked Cain that shed it; but that pleads for mercy and favour to all believing sinners. We have a rare illustration of the efficacious intercession of Christ in heaven, in the famous story of Amyntas, who appeared as an advocate for his brother Æschylus, who was strongly accused, and in great danger of being condemned to die. This Amyntas having performed great services for the state, and merited highly of the commonwealth, in whose service one of his hands was cut off in battle, comes into the court on his brother's behalf, and said nothing, but only lifted up his arm, and shewed them an arm without a hand; which so moved them, that immediately they acquitted his brother. And thus you have Christ represented visionally, Rev. v. 6. as standing between God and us, 'And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.' That is, he was represented as bearing in his glorified body the marks of his death and sacrifice; the wounds which he received for his people's sins on the earth,

are as it were still visible and fresh in heaven, as a prevailing argument with the Father to give forth the mercies that he pleads for to them.

*3dly*, In presenting his will and desire to the Father on their behalf, not in a humble and supplicatory manner, in the way of charity, but by a claim in the way of justice. He now pleads that his people may be put in full possession of all the blessings which were purchased for them by his bloody death. We find him pleading to this purpose immediately before his passion, John xvii. 24. forecited. He minds the Father as it were of the covenant that was between them both, of his performing the condition required on his part, and so claims the performance of God's promise as a debt due to his meritorious obedience even unto death. He hath 'made his soul an offering for sin;' and therefore pleads that he may 'see his seed, prolong his days,' and that 'the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in his hands,' Isa. liii. 10, 11.

*4thly*, In his presenting his people's prayers and petitions unto God, and pleading that they may be accepted and granted for his sake. Their prayers and religious performances are both impure and imperfect; but his precious merit, applied by his powerful intercession, purifies and perfects them. This skilful Advocate puts them into form and language suited to the methods of the court of heaven, and by his great interest there procures them a speedy hearing. This was excellently typified by the high priest's going in before the Lord with the blood of the sacrifice, and his hands full of incense. After he had offered the sacrifice, without, he was to take his hands full of those aromatic drugs of which the incense was composed, without the vail, and put them in a censer of gold full of fire, and cover the mercy-seat with the fume of it. This was a figure of Christ's intercession and offering up his people's services to God. He is the alone altar upon which our sacrifices must ascend before the Lord with a grateful fume: the incense of his merit must be added to our prayers, to make them ascend before the mercy-seat as a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour. Hence he is represented, Rev. viii. 3. as an angel standing at the golden altar which was before the throne, with a golden censer in his hand, offering up the prayers of all the saints, perfuming them with the incense that was given him. By the *much*



*incense* mentioned here, we are to understand the mighty quantity of merit and the great power of his intercession, which was a sweet savour to all his people's sacrifices, and renders them acceptable to God.

*5thly*, In his answering all the bills of indictment which are brought in against them. Many times a believer is brought in as an arraigned criminal before the divine tribunal, where Satan appears as the accuser, brings in the charge of sin, pleads the righteousness of the law, solicits for judgment upon his accusations, and for the execution of the curse due to the crime. The justice of God calls for vengeance, and conscience thunders out nothing but hell and wrath. Now, while the believer is in these dismal circumstances, Christ steps in and answers the charge. He pleads the efficacy of his merit against the greatness of the believing sinner's crimes, and his satisfaction to justice by the death of the cross against all the demands and challenges of the law. And thus the sentence of condemnation due unto the sinner for his sin is averted, and a sentence of absolution is pronounced, upon the merit and plea of this powerful Intercessor. Hence we find the apostle glorying in this, Rom. viii. 33, 34. 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' Satan may accuse believers; but Christ can soon silence him. Thus, when Joshua the high priest stood before the Lord in filthy garments, Satan stood at his right hand to accuse him; but the angel, namely, the angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, interposed, saying, 'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan,' Zech. iii. 1, 2. Though their garments be filthy, yet Christ can take them away, and clothe them with change of raiment. Though Satan be always ready to resist them, yet Christ stands always at the right-hand of God in heaven, to plead for them, and silence Satan.

*Thirdly*, I shall shew some of the grounds or reasons of our High Priest's intercession.

1. Christ intercedes for his people, because he had a commission, a call, and command from the Father, for this purpose. Is. xlii. 6. 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness.' So far was our mighty Intercessor from engaging in this service as an intruder or usurper, that he entered upon

it under the warrant of Heaven's commission. The Lord called him to be a priest. For verily 'he glorified not himself, to be made an High priest; but he that said unto him. Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee,' Heb. v. 5. And as the Lord called him to be a priest, so to all the acts of the priestly office. He called him to make his soul an offering for sin, to pour out his life unto death, and to shed his blood for the satisfaction of offended justice. In a word, he called him to make intercession for transgressors. For says the Lord, 'I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me.'

2. He intercedes for his people, because they were given him for this end, John xvii. 6. 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' The elect that the Father gave to Christ were his own three ways. They were creatures, and therefore their life and being were derived from him. They were criminals, and therefore their life and being were forfeited to him. They were chosen, and therefore their living and being were designed for him. They were given to Christ that the election of grace might not be frustrated, that none of the little ones might perish. Yea they were given him, that the undertaking of Christ might not be fruitless; for they were given him as his seed, in whom he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, and consequently might not spend his strength and shed his blood in vain. Now, because the elect were thus given to Christ, therefore he intercedes for them, John xvii. 9, 'I pray for them: I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.'

3. He intercedes for his people, because it is a special part of his priestly office to do so. As the high priest under the law was not only to slay and offer the sacrifice in the outer part of the tabernacle, on the anniversary day of expiation, but to enter with the fresh blood into the sanctuary, and sprinkle it seven times; and not only so, but was to bring a censer full of burning coals off the altar, with incense in his hands, to be put upon the fire before the Lord within the vail, that so the cloud in the incense might cover the mercy-seat: in like manner, after our great High Priest had offered himself a sacrifice to God in his bloody death, he entered into heaven, not only with his blood, but with the incense of his prayers, as a cloud about the mercy-seat, to

preserve by his life the salvation which he had purchased by his death. Hence the apostle assures us, that our salvation depends upon his intercession, and his intercession upon his priesthood, Heb. vii. 24, 25. 'This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

4. He intercedes for his people, because he was their propitiation; for the efficacy of his plea depends upon the value and virtue of his sacrifice. As the high priest under the law could not enter into the holy of holies, till by the slaying of the sacrifice he had blood to carry with him: so no more could our Priest be admitted to solicit at the throne of grace, till by his death he had satisfied the tribunal of justice. Thus, because he paid the debt as our Surety, he is fit to plead the payment as our Attorney. What he finished on earth, he continually presents in heaven. By shedding his blood he made expiation, and by presenting it he makes intercession. In the one he prepared the remedy, and in the other he applies it.

5. He intercedes for his people, because his doing so is one of the great ends of his ascension and session at the right hand of God. In his incarnation he came down from the Father to acquaint us with his gracious purposes, and how far he had agreed with God in our behalf; and at his ascension he went from us to the Father, to sue out the benefits which he had so dearly purchased. He drew up an answer upon the cross to the bill that sin, by virtue of the law, had drawn against us, and ascended to heaven as an Advocate to plead that answer upon his throne, and to rejoin to all the replies against it. And therefore the apostle tells us, that he is 'entered into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 24.

6. He intercedes for his people, because of that matchless and amazing love which he bears to them. He loves them with a love infinitely transcending the reach of human or angelic conception; he loves them with a love that knows neither height nor depth, breadth nor length, but is absolutely incomprehensible. His love to them brought him down from heaven, and made him willingly undergo all those sorrows and sufferings, which like impetuous torrents poured in



upon him. And certainly, seeing in his love and in his pity he purchased eternal redemption for them, he will never cease to plead for the application of it to them. Seeing in such plentiful streams he shed his precious blood to save them, it is not to be imagined that he will spare his prayers for them.

7. He intercedes for his people, because this service of love is that wherein he takes the greatest delight and pleasure. Before time existed, his delights were with the sons of men; and when the fulness of time did dawn, he said, 'Lo, I come,' &c. He had a delight to live with the sons of men, and to die for them. And no sooner does he enter heaven after his death and resurrection, but there he delights to act on their account, to plead their cause, and to intercede for all the blessings of his purchase to them. This is the will of the Father, and he delights to do it.

I conclude all with an inference or two.

1. How wonderful is the love of God in appointing an Intercessor for us, not an angel, but his own beloved Son! Were we left to ourselves, and to our own pleas, our least sins would ruin us, and all the grounds of intercession we could plead upon would be rejected, as unworthy of acceptance before the throne of God.

2. How wonderful is the love of our Redeemer, in condescending to act so friendly a part to us, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, and foul miscarriages against him! How should it fill our hearts with wonder, that he who is our Judge, should take upon him to manage our cause in the court of heaven; that he who has a mouth to condemn us, and wrath to consume us for our sins, should bind the arms of his wrath, and employ his tongue to solicit our cause and procure us the richest blessings!

3. Then true believers have a friend in the court of heaven, who is agenting their cause, managing their concerns, and will make all things work together for their good. Whatever their cause be, and however fearful they may be about the issue of it, all shall go right at length, through the interest of their mighty Intercessor.

4. Believers cannot finally miscarry, and utterly fall away: for they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Their Redeemer ever liveth to make intercession for them. So that neither their own sins, nor all the

temptations of Satan, nor the frowns or allurements of the world, shall ever prevail to make them fall from their steadfastness, or from the favour of God: for Christ, as their High Priest, hath died for their sins, and will never intermit his suits to God in their behalf till they be safely brought to glory.

5. *Lastly*, Employ the Lord Jesus Christ as your High Priest, to bring you to God, depending on his merit as the ground of the expiation of your guilt, and giving you a title unto eternal life. And make use of him as your Advocate with the Father, to procure you all the blessings you stand in need of for time and eternity.

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OF CHRIST'S KINGLY OFFICE.

PSALM ii. 6.—*Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*

THE New Testament leaves us no ground to doubt of our Lord Jesus Christ being the person here spoke of, as several passages in this psalm are expressly therein applied to him. The words contain a direct assertion of Christ's being appointed King of Zion, his spiritual kingdom—Therein we have,

1. His office: He is a *King*, invested with all regal power and princely authority: being 'King of kings, and Lord of lords;' yea 'the Prince of the kings of the earth.' And this name he hath written on his vesture and on his thigh, Rev. xix. 16.

2. His kingdom, over which he rules, the *holy hill of Zion*; which was an eminent type of the gospel-church, and is called *holy*, because the temple, the house of God was built upon it.

3. His right to this kingdom; *I have sent him my King*, says Jehovah. The Father hath placed him in that office, giving him, as God-man, Mediator, 'all power in heaven and in earth.' He is 'given to be Head over all things to the church.'

4. The stability of this kingdom against all attempts made to oppose or destroy it, *Yet have I set my King*, &c.—Though enemies roar and rage, and leave no means unessayed to hinder the erection and establishment thereof; yet all their plots shall be unsuccessful, and all their deliberations shall

miscarry. I have set him as King, and will maintain his throne.

The doctrinal proposition arising from the words is,  
Doctr. 'Christ executes the Office of a King.'

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall shew,

I. That Christ is a King.

II. What sort of a kingdom the kingdom of Christ is.

III. The acts of his kingly office.

IV. The properties of this King.

V. *Lastly*, Deduce some inferences for application.

I. I am to shew that our Lord Jesus Christ is a King. This will appear, if ye consider,

1. That he was prophesied of in the Old Testament under this character. Thus old Jacob on his death-bed says of him, Gen. xlix. 10. 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.' And says the evangelical prophet, Isa. xi. 1, 2, 3. 'There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord: and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.'

2. That he was of old promised to his people under this notion: Isa. ix. 6, 7. 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. Zech. ix. 9. 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.' Micah v. 2. 'Out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel.' He is called *the King* by way of eminency, Cant. i. 4. 'The King hath brought me into the banqueting-house.' Ezek. xxxiv. 24. 'I the Lord will be their God, and my servant



David a prince among them.' That he should be a King, was declared to his mother, by the angel, before his conception in her womb, Luke i. 32, 33. 'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' And hence he is called 'King of kings, and Lord of lords,' Rev. xvii. 14.

3. That he has all the ensigns of royalty. He has a sword: hence it is said, Psal. xlv. 3. 'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou Most Mighty.' By this we are to understand the word of God, which is the great instrument by which he maintains and propagates the glory and honour of his kingdom in the world.—A sceptre, which is another badge of royal majesty, Heb. i. 8. 'A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.' By this we are to understand his Spirit, which he puts forth in the government of the world, and in his operations of grace in the hearts of his people, guiding and conforming them, through his word and ordinances, to the holy will of God.—A crown: It is said, Rev. vi. 2. that 'a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.' And we read of a crown where-with his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, Cant. iii. 11.—An escutcheon or coat of arms: He bears the lion in his arms; hence called 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah,' Rev. v. 5; which imports that he should be a great conqueror and a victorious King.—A throne, Heb. i. 8. 'Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever.—Subjects, over whom he rules, even all the creatures in heaven and in earth, Psal. ii. 9. 'His kingdom ruleth over all,' Psal. ciii. 19. All the angels of heaven have taken the oath of allegiance to him, Heb. i. 6. 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' More especially he rules in the church. God the Father has set the crown on his head, and he holds it by immediate tenure from Heaven.—He enacts laws, which all his subjects are bound to obey. His laws are contained in his word, and they reach both the outward and the inward man.

4. That he sealed this truth with his precious blood.—When Pilate asked him, 'Art thou a King then?' he answered, 'Thou sayest that I am a King.' To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. On this

account it is said of him, that 'before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good confession,' 1 Tim. vi. 13.

From all which it is evident, that our Lord Jesus is a King. Yea, he is King of kings, and hath a pre-eminence over them all; and therefore he is called 'the Prince of the kings of the earth.' And indeed he must needs be so; for it is by him that kings reign and princes decree justice.—They all hold their crowns by immediate tenure from this great King. And he infinitely outvies them all; having the highest throne, the largest dominions, and the longest possession.

II. I proceed to shew the nature of Christ's kingdom, or what sort of a kingdom it is. Christ has a twofold kingdom.

1. An essential kingdom. He is Lord and King over all the creatures by nature, inasmuch as he is the eternal Son of God, equal with his Father in all things. In this respect he has an universal empire, which extends over all things in heaven and earth, yea and to hell itself. He is the sole Monarch of the whole world; and all the princes and potentates of the earth are but his vicegerents that govern under, and should rule for him. He is 'the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords,' as the apostle styles him, 1 Tim. vi. 15.

2. He has an economical or Mediatory kingdom. Originally the kingdom belongs to him as God, and derivatively it belongs to him as God-man and Mediator. He is constituted King by divine appointment and institution, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* He is invested with authority over all the creatures; hence it is said, Eph. i. 22. 'God hath put all things under his feet.' He rules from sea to sea, and to the ends of all the earth, yea to the utmost bounds of God's creation. 'He hath given him power over all flesh,' as this King himself says, John xvii. 2. All things are subject to his government, and ready to fulfil his pleasure, when he issues his word of command.

The church is his peculiar and special kingdom. God 'hath given him to be head over all things to the church,' Eph. i. 22. This kingdom is a spiritual kingdom: hence he says, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' John xviii. 36. The king thereof appeared not in worldly pomp and grandeur, attended with a splendid equipage, surrounded with

armed guards, or having a brilliant and magnificent court, but in spiritual splendor, suited to the nature of his kingdom, Zech. ix. 9. forecited. His throne is in the heavens, not on earth, Psal. cx. 1. His sceptre is a spiritual one, the word of God, which he wields for the good of his people; it is the rod of his strength, which he sends out of Zion, and by the instrumentality of it he makes them willing in the day of his power, Psal. cx. 2, 3. Compare Isa. ii. 3. 'Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' The subjects of this kingdom are spiritual men, born of God, begotten of the word of truth, the incorruptible seed of the word, John i. 12. The way of its administration is spiritual, reaching neither men's bodies nor purses, but their consciences; 'the weapons' of it 'not being carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds,' 2 Cor. x. 4. Its laws are spiritual, reaching the innermost parts of the heart; and the benefits of it are spiritual, righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost, &c.

The administration of his government with respect to this kingdom is either external or internal.

1. It is external; and that again is either more general, or more particular. (1.) More general, in the course of his providence. He as Mediator has a providential influence on all the affairs of this world, ordering and determining them to the special benefit and interest of his people. Hence it is that all things work together for the good of those who love God. We have an admirable scheme of divine providence in Ezek. i. There you may see how all the wheels, i. e. motions and revolutions here in this inferior world, are guided and directed by the Spirit that is in them; and in verse 26. it is all run up into the supreme cause: there you find one like the Son of man, which is Jesus Christ, sitting upon the throne, and giving forth orders for the government of all. (2.) It is more particular, in his appointing laws, ordinances, and officers, in his church, to manage and govern it, and to inflict censures upon scandalous offenders.

2. It is internal, in the hearts of his people. He subdues them to himself in a day of power, writes his laws upon their hearts, and rules and governs them. In this respect it is said, Luke xvii. 21. 'The kingdom of God is within you.' There he sits enthroned King, and sways his royal sceptre. But more of this anon.



III. The acts of Christ's kingly office may be reduced to these heads, viz. subduing sinners to himself, ruling and governing them, defending and protecting them, restraining his own and their enemies, and conquering them. Of each of these I shall treat in order.

*First*, Christ exercises his kingly office in subduing a people to himself, making them willing in the day of his power to submit to his authority and sceptre, Psal. cx. 3. and so subjecting them to him as willing subjects. For this end consider,

1. That the great design of Christ's kingly office as Mediator is to raise up to himself a kingdom in the bowels of the kingdoms of the earth, Acts xv. 14. and to make the subjects of men the subjects of the divine Mediator. So that those who will not allow a spiritual kingdom within a temporal one, refuse Christ to be King.

2. Our Lord has a right to this kingdom, having purchased it with his blood, Acts xx. 28. He comes not without a title to conquer, but has the title of his Father's gift, and his own purchase. Ere he could attain to the possession of this kingdom, he behoved to swim through a sea of bloody sufferings, and he purchased every subject with the immense price of his precious blood. Thus his title is indefeasible.

3. Though our Lord has this just right to the kingdom, yet his subjects have sworn allegiance to the prince of darkness, and are in actual rebellion against him. That is the common character of them, which we have Tit. iii. 3. 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.' And they will never yield to him, till they be overcome by his mighty power. He gets no subjects but by stroke of sword, and the exertion of the same power that was put forth in his own resurrection.

4. Christ as a King doth by power overcome them at length, and makes them willingly submit to him, renounce obedience to the devil, the world, and their own base lusts, his enemies, and causes them cheerfully stoop to the yoke of his obedience, and to say, as Isa. xxvi. 13. 'O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.'

5. The weapons wherewith Christ subdues his subjects are

his word and Spirit, whereby they are effectually convinced of their sin and rebellion, and reduced to subjection to him. The word is the rod of his power, by which he has subdued nations to himself. It was by this word that in the primitive times he overturned the empire of the devil, silenced the heathen oracles, and demolished the Pagan idolatrous worship. And because the word comes to many without the Spirit, therefore Christ has many subjects in appearance only, mere pretenders to loyalty to him; they are really the subjects of Satan, and only feign submission to Zion's King. But where the Spirit comes with the word, there the heart is subjected to Christ in very deed, 2 Cor. x. 4; and Christ has a kingdom not only among them, but within them.

*Secondly*, Christ exercises his kingly office in ruling and governing his subjects. No kingdom can be without a government; and Christ's kingdom must needs be an orderly kingdom, which he himself governs as the supreme Head and Monarch. Now,

1. Forasmuch as the church is a visible society on earth, whose head is in heaven, Christ governs them externally.

(1.) Giving them laws according to which they are to demean themselves every way towards God and towards their neighbour, Isa. xxxii. 22. 'The Lord is our Lawgiver.' Those laws which are the laws of the kingdom of Christ, are written in the Bible, and are a transcript of his perfections, and derive all their authority and vigour from him alone, and not from the church, or any body of men whatever. And none have power to add to or diminish from the laws of this great King.

(2.) He gives them officers, in whose hands he has lodged this government, who are to be accountable to him for their administration, on whom they depend, and from whom they derive their power. These are neither Pope nor prelates, none of these being officers of Christ's appointment; nor yet the civil magistrate, who as such is not so much as a member of the church; and while there were no magistrates but what were enemies to the church and the cause of Christ, yet Christ appointed a government therein; as appears from 1 Cor. xii. 28. 'God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.' But these officers are preaching and

ruling elders; as is clear from what the apostle says, 1 Tim. v. 17. 'Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.'

(3.) He gives discipline and censures to controul the unruly, and check the scandalous, and keep the society clean; to which all that own Christ as a King ought to be subject, who rules his people by church-discipline, as well as teaches them by the ministry of men. This appears from what our Lord himself says, Mat. xviii. 17, 18. 'If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.'

2. But seeing Christ is God, and his laws reach the inner man, which lies open to no other but himself, he governs his people internally.

(1.) Writing his law in their hearts, in consequence of the divine promise, Heb. viii. 10. holding forth their duty to them by an inward evidence, making them to know what his will and pleasure is, that they may obey it from the heart. Hence he says, Isa. xxx. 21. 'Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.'

(2.) He powerfully inclines and over-rules them by his Spirit unto obedience, while he sits at the helm, and steers the ship of the soul what way he will, Acts xx. 22. To which we may add,

(3.) Those secret rewards and corrections which are sent from his own hand; while he bestows on them spiritual comforts and soul-feasts when in the way of their duty, and gives them such strokes for their correction, even for secret faults, as may let them see, that though their King be in heaven, yet he judges on the earth. Hence he says to the church of Pergamos, Rev. ii. 17. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.' And to the church of the Laodiceans he says, Rev. iii. 19. 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.'

*Thirdly*, Christ executes his kingly office in defending his



people. The kingdom of Christ always had and ever will have many enemies, who will continually be within bow-shot of its subjects. These enemies are the devil, the flesh, the world, and death. Christ defends against these, as a king defends his subjects.

1. By preserving his church in being, notwithstanding all the cunning and furious attempts of enemies to destroy her. Hence the bush, though it burn, will not consume. Of her he says, Isa. xxvii. 3. 'I the Lord do keep it: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' And he keeps every particular believer, so as they never totally and finally fall away, John x. 28. 'I give unto them eternal life (says he): and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.'

2. By giving them necessary support and help under all sufferings, troubles, and temptations, never leaving them, no not at the hour of death. Hence it is said, Isa. lxiii. 9. 'In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.' 1 Cor. x. 13. 'There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' For this he makes use of the angels as he will, they being 'all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,' Heb. i. 14. And he can employ men, even the worst of men, in that service: hence the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth, Rev. xii. 16.

*Fourthly*, Christ executes his kingly office in restraining his enemies, and those of his people. While, though their power remains with them to annoy his people, yet he sets bounds to them, over which they cannot pass; Psal. lxxvi. 10. 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee (says the Psalmist: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.'—Christ has all his and his people's enemies, outward and inward in a chain; and no further can they go than he is pleased to let out a link to them. If it were not so, all would quickly be over-run; but one jot they cannot go beyond his permission.

*Fifthly and lastly*, Christ executes his kingly office in conquering his enemies, and those of his people. This conquest is twofold. (1.) When now he takes away their power in part. Thus is the devil conquered already, that he has not all the world so at his will, and under his yoke of slavery, as before the coming of Christ, when he ruled among the nations with an unlimited sway. And thus the devil and the flesh are conquered in the day of converting grace, when the power of these enemies is broken, and the captives are delivered from the tyranny and bondage in which they were formerly held. Thus the wicked world is conquered, when their rage against the people of God is laid aside, and the church enjoys tranquillity: 'For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her, Zech. ii. 5. And death is conquered when its sting is taken away, which it is as to every believer; so that they can say, 'O death, where is thy sting?' 1 Cor. xv. 55. (2.) There is a complete conquest remaining, which will be at the last day, when Christ will gather in all his people into one glorious company, transport them into those mansions of bliss which he has prepared for them, and reign over them for ever in heaven; when all his own, and his people's enemies are utterly destroyed from the presence of God, and the glory of his power, 'For he must reign till all his enemies be put under his feet,' 1 Cor. xv. 25. Then death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire, Rev. xx. 14. and the devil and all his slaves shall be shut up for ever in the infernal Tophet. This shall be the most signal display of the glorious conquests of this King, and the trophies of his victory shall be the subject of the song of the redeemed for ever.

This kingdom of Christ will be eternal, Luke i. 33. 'He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Dan. ii. 44. 'The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed,—and it shall stand for ever.' It is true the way of its present administration will cease, and so he will deliver up the kingdom to his Father, but exhibiting it as consummated and perfected. But Christ shall remain the King, Head, and Husband of his church for ever, Rev. xix. 7. and he shall be the eternal bond of union betwixt God and the saints.

IV. Let us consider some of the properties or qualities of Zion's King.

1. He is a King of ancient, glorious, and honourable extract : for he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. His goings forth were of old, from everlasting. And he is God over all, blessed for ever.

2. He is an absolute king, who makes laws for his subjects, but is not bound by any himself. His will is his law, and he does without controul whatever seems good to himself in heaven and in earth. Yea, so uncontroulable is his government, that none may oblige him to render a reason of his actions. ' Who may say unto him, What dost thou ? ' But though Christ be an absolute monarch, yet his government is no way tyrannical, but managed according to the eternal rules of righteousness, justice, and holiness.

3. He is a wise King: for he is the wisdom of God, yea, God only wise; and therefore infinitely able to guide his subjects through all the labyrinths of danger and difficulty wherein they may be involved; while he ' teaches them in the way of wisdom, and leads them in right paths; so that when they go, their steps shall not be straitened: and when they run, they shall not stumble,' Prov. iv. 11, 12.

4. Christ is a very powerful King: for he has more than the strength of an unicorn; yea, he has an arm that is full of power, being the Lord of hosts, strong and mighty in battle; and therefore infinitely able to secure his subjects against all the attempts which devils or men can make against them. Yea, so great is his strength, and so mighty is his power, that one angry blast thereof will make all his enemies to fly as chaff before the wind; and therefore he says, ' Who will set the briars and thorns against me in battle; I would go through them, I would burn them up together,' Isa. xxvii. 4.

5. Christ is a just King: ' Just and right is he.' Though clouds and darkness may be about him, yet ' justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne,' Psal. xcvi. 2. So that his government is impartially exercised, without any by-respect to the great or the small, the rich or the poor, &c. Neither the meanness of the poor and low, nor the honour and greatness of the high and noble, will incline him to do any thing in the least inconsistent with the immutable rules of perfect justice. ' He accepteth not the persons of



princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor: for they are all the work of his hands,' Job xxxiv. 19.

6. Christ is a very merciful King. Mercy is the prevailing attribute of his nature, which he delights to make the children of men feel the benign effects of. Therefore he has proclaimed himself to be 'the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious.' He does not willingly grieve nor afflict the children of men. He takes no pleasure in the blood of his most implacable and inveterate foes; and bears with a very tender hand upon his afflicted, broken, and discouraged people. For the bruised reed he will not break, nor quench the smoking flax. He heals the broken in heart, and binds up all their wounds. In all the afflictions of his people he is afflicted; and he that touches them, touches the apple of his eye.

7. Christ is a very meek and patient King. Never any in the world could have borne such indignities, or digested such affronts, as he has met with from such of his own subjects, to whom he has shewn the most distinguishing kindness. Had he not been thus patient, Judah and Ephraim had soon been unpeopled. 'As for them, they were bent to backsliding: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him,' Hos. xi. 7. Though he sent many prophets unto them, calling upon them, and saying, 'Return, ye backsliding children,' &c. yet they did not regard them. Who after this could imagine, that this just and jealous King would have entertained one thought of kindness towards them? yet hear what he says, 'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together,' ver. 8.

8. Christ is a very beautiful King. His glory outshines the sun in its full strength. The united constellations of all created beauty fall infinitely short of his; for he is fairer than the children of men, yea, he is altogether lovely.

9. Christ is a most humble and condescending King: for he does not disdain to be acquainted with the meanest among the sons of men; the beggar will be as welcome to him as the prince. The poor and the rich are all one to him; and he takes as much notice of Job on the dunghill, as of David on the throne. Hear what the prophet, in the name of this

great King, says, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. 'Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? for all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.'

10. Christ is a very rich and opulent King. The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof. He is the heir of all things. Honour and riches are with him, yea, durable riches and righteousness. So that those who are his honest and faithful subjects shall never want any thing that is good for them. Such are the immense treasures and infinite riches of this glorious King, that all the ministers on earth, and all the angels in heaven, cannot possibly lay them open. For can they grasp the heavens in their arms, and the sun in the hollow of their hands? can they weigh the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Suppose they could do all this, and a thousand times more, yet could they not give an account of the estate of this mighty King. So that his subjects shall never want either grace or glory.

11. He is an immortal and everlasting King. 'The heavens and the earth shall perish, but he shall endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shall they be changed, But he is the same, and his years shall have no end,' Psal. cii. 26, 27. Though the best, the wisest, and the richest kings upon earth will die, and leave their subjects exposed to many inconveniences consequent on their death, yet this King of glory lives for evermore, and will rule over his subjects with justice, mercy, and righteousness, through all the ages of eternity.

It remains to make some improvement of this subject.

1. The kings of the earth have no ground to grudge the kingdom of Christ its freedom in their dominions; seeing it is a spiritual kingdom, and quite of another nature than the kingdoms of this world; and interferes not with any of the just rights and prerogatives of earthly crowns. Yet how sad is it that this kingdom should be an eye-sore to the kings of the earth, and that they should employ their power to suppress and bear it down?

2. The Pope's supremacy, and the supremacy of the magistrate over all persons, and in all causes, whereby they have

been made heads of the church, is daring blasphemy against Christ, a bold usurpation of his crown and dignity, and high rebellion against him, who will not suffer the jewels to be stolen from his crown, to deck the head of any earthly power whatever, without the severest testimony of his resentment.

3. There is a government of the church distinct from and independent upon the civil government, lodged in the hands of church-officers, whereby they have a power, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to meet in judicatories, transact matters there according to the word and laws of this King, to dissolve their meetings in his name, to appoint fasts and thanksgivings, as the state of the church may require, to inflict censures on offenders, bind and loose, and to do every thing necessary for advancing this kingdom in a spiritual way, but no otherwise. And whoever presumes to hinder them in these acts of administration, or arrogate any of them to themselves, are in so far enemies to Christ and his royal prerogatives.

4. This government of the church is not alterable by any power on earth, whether civil or ecclesiastic; nor have they that are entrusted with it any power to give up the rights and privileges conferred on them by Christ to any person or persons whatsoever. If they do so, they are unfaithful to their trust, and their conduct will be highly resented another day.

5. None have power to appoint any pieces of worship in the Church that Christ has not appointed. For he is the sole Lawgiver of the church, and has in his word appointed the platform of the worship which he requires his subjects to pay unto him. And therefore for any to appoint ceremonies and rights of worship which bear not the stamp of his institution, act in opposition to his laws; and all their rites are useless and unprofitable. Equally culpable are those who presume to make any terms of communion, or of admission to the ordinances of the church, but such as Christ has left behind him. This is high rebellion against the King of Zion.

6. The truth of the kingdom of Christ is a solid ground of suffering, on which people may comfortably lose whatever is dear to them in the world, knowing they are in the way of their duty. And this was the ground of the sufferings of the Lord's people in the persecuting reigns before the Revolution, whose memory ought to be always regarded,



for their zealous and firm adherence to the prerogatives of Christ's kingdom.

7. The church shall ride out all the storms that can blow upon her, whether from earth or hell. All plots and contrivances against her shall be defeated in the end; for her King liveth, and will never suffer the gates of hell to prevail against her. The crown shall flourish on his head, when the church's enemies shall be ruined, and their kingdoms laid by for ever.

8. However weak any poor believer be amongst many enemies, yet the broken ship shall surely come to land. The spark of grace shall be preserved amidst an ocean of difficulties and corruptions, within or without. The seed of grace sown in the heart shall be maintained, and spring up in the fruits of holiness. All Christ's honest subjects shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

9. Whoever they be that refuse subjection to the ordinances and discipline of Christ's house, do in so far reject Christ from ruling over them. Consider this, ye that neglect a regular attendance upon the ordinances of divine institution, and will not submit to discipline and censure for your scandalous, and offensive behaviour. Ye are the enemies of Zion's King, and your conduct plainly declares, that ye will not have this man to reign over you. Repent of this your rebellion, otherwise ye shall be slain as his enemies.

10. See, believers, ye that are striving against sin and Satan, and waging war with your lusts and all Christ's enemies, to whom you are to have recourse for help in all your difficulties; even to your Almighty King, who is infinitely able to help you in all straits. Make use of him daily as your King, applying and trusting to him, for life, strength, defence, and victory over all your enemies.

11. *Lastly*, Ye that are strangers to Christ, captives to Satan, and under a miserable thralldom to your own lusts, will ye be persuaded to come under the sceptre and government of King Jesus; take on his yoke, and subject yourselves to him and his blessed government. For motives, consider,

(1.) The great glory and dignity of his person. He is God equal with the Father, the wonder of men and angels. The most glorious monarch that ever swayed sceptre among men, is but like a worm of the earth, or a despicable insect

in the air, compared to him. All created excellencies fall under a vail, when his glory begins to shine.

(2.) He has the best right to govern your souls. The devil and your vile lusts are all usurpers. But Christ is your rightful Lord. He has an original right to you as God, and a derivative right as Mediator. He hath an unquestionable title by the grant of the Father, Acts ii. 36. 'Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' And he hath a right by his own merit and purchase, Rom. xiv. 9. "For this end Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Ye are his, whether ye will or not. Ye are entirely at his disposal. He has more power over you than the potter has over the clay. Your own consent and willingness adds nothing to his title; but it will fearfully aggravate your sin, if ye refuse it.

(3.) Consider the misery of your condition till once ye submit to him. Ye are under a miserable bondage to the devil; ye are slaves to the prince of darkness; that spirit rules in you that worketh in all the children of disobedience. Your condition will grow still worse and worse, till it be incapable of any further addition of misery. Ye are now without God, without the promises of the covenant, without peace, without the pardon of sin, having no communion with God, or title to heaven. Ye are slaves to your sordid lusts, under the curse of the law, and condemned already. Whenever ye die out of Christ, ye shall die in your sins; and he that was your ruler and leader in this world, will be both your companion and tormentor in the world to come. O fearful condition! Can ye sleep quietly in your chains? When ye hear that Christ was anointed by the Father to preach good tidings to the meek, to proclaim liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; should not this make you sigh, nay cry, through the grates of the prison, to this glorious Deliverer who stands at the door? When ye see Christ's standard pitched in the gospel, and his glorious banner displayed there, will ye not repair to it, and list yourselves among his faithful subjects?

(4.) It is your greatest dignity to be subjects to Christ. Theodosius the Emperor thought it a greater honour to be a servant to Christ, than the head of an empire. Christ's

subjects are called vessels of honour, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, &c. They are consecrated, and set apart for God, to be the objects of his special grace, and the instruments of his glory and service in the world. This advanceth them to great dignity and honour. Subject yourselves then to Christ, and ye shall arrive at the highest pinnacle of honour.

(5.) His government is most sweet and pleasant. His yoke is easy, and his burden light. His cross is better than the world's crown. Submit then to his easy sceptre.

(6.) Consider the great happiness that will attend your subjecting yourselves to Christ's government. It is introductory to every privilege, mercy, and blessing, that men can desire. By this ye will be delivered from the vassalage of Satan, the servitude of sin, the malediction of the law, and danger of the wrath to come. Let this prevail on you to submit to this King.

(7.) By this ye will put the crown upon his head, and give him the reward of his bloody death and sufferings, when ye renounce sin and Satan, and all the lusts and idols that exercised dominion over you before, and betake yourselves to him by faith, and give your hearty consent that he shall reign in your souls.

(8.) This is the design of all God's ordinances and dispensations; all the arrows in the gospel-quiver are levelled at this mark; it is the point and centre into which all these blessed lines are drawn. Submit to him, then, and disappoint not the design of all his love and grace to poor sinners.

(9.) Ye can have no saving benefit by Christ, unless ye submit to him as your King. It is through his kingly office that all his other offices are made effectual. All the blessings and benefits of his purchase are conveyed to believers this way. It is by his regal power that he changes their natures, powerfully inclines them to believe on him, and to love and obey him. If ye accept not of him as your King, ye can have no benefit by him at all. Ye must receive him as your Lord, as well as your Prophet and Priest.

(10.) *Lastly*, If ye will not stoop and bow to him, he will break you in pieces. God has settled an irreversible decree, that 'to him every knee shall bow;' and if they do it not cheerfully and willingly, they shall be made to do it with force and constraint. He has a rod of iron, and therewith



he will break in pieces the mightiest potentates of the earth that will not subject themselves to him. Hence we have that counsel given them by the Spirit of God, Psal. ii. 10, 11, 12. 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.'

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OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION.

PHILIPPIANS ii. 8.—*He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

HAVING discoursed of our Redeemer and his incarnation, and the several offices he executes under that character, I come now to treat of his amazing humiliation and abasement, to which he willingly submitted, in order to accomplish the redemption of elect sinners. The text holds forth his state of humiliation.

1. The voluntariness of it: it was no matter of force or compulsion; *He voluntarily humbled himself.*

2. The nature of it: it was *obedience*, viz. to the Father's will, which comprehends the whole of what Christ did and suffered for our redemption.

3. The depth of it: it was *unto death*; and he could go no lower. As for the kind of death, he humbled himself to the basest and most humiliating kind of it, *the death of the cross*. Under this is comprehended his burial, and continuing for a time under the power of death. Death had our Redeemer as low as it could carry him,

4. The continuance of this humiliation. He had a race thereof set before him, in which he continued till he came to death, as the end of it.

Christ's humiliation was a voluntary thing; he voluntarily did and suffered whatever he did and suffered for us, Psal. xl. 7. 'Lo, I come,' said he, Even in the deepest points of his humiliation, 'he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth,' to oppose the humbling treatment he was exposed to. Man fell off from God by his ambition, and there-

fore was Christ humbled, that he might be recovered again. from his misery to the favour of God, and allegiance to him.

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall consider the several parts of our Lord's humiliation, as they are laid down in the Catechism, viz. 'his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; his being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.' What a catalouge of humiliating circumstances is here, to which the Son of God was subjected from the cradle to the grave; the consideration of all which should excite us to hate sin, the fatal cause of all, and to endear to us the merciful Redeemer, who for our sake went through all this scene to accomplish our salvation.

FIRST, The Son of God was born, and that in a low condition. Here is a wide step at first, a step from heaven to earth; which is a mystery of infinite condescension. Take this article in pieces, and behold humiliation in every point. The Son of God was humbled in his incarnation, his conception, his birth, and the circumstances attending it.

1. The Son of God became man. To see a king become a slave, and the order of angels degraded into crawling worms, would be matter of wonder; but a greater is here, viz. God not become an angel, though that would have been infinitely below him, but a man, a son of Adam, taking the likeness of sinful flesh. Hence the apostle cries out with admiration, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.' O deep humiliation! far greater than if all the creatures had been degraded to the lowest degree of existence.

2. He was conceived in the womb of a sinful woman, the virgin Mary, who, as a daughter of Adam, was certainly infected with original sin as well as the rest of his posterity. O the depth of the Son of God's humiliation! It would have been low, had the great God, the Creator of heaven and earth, purposing to become man, been created as Adam, as it were at once, and in a perfect state of manhood. But to be conceived in the womb of a woman, was yet lower. He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain as God, was as man shut up for the ordinary number of months in the womb of a woman, whom he himself had made. His body was formed not of any substance sent down from heaven, but of

her's a creature, Gal. iv. 4. He was 'made of a woman;' that is, his body was formed of a part of her substance, being of the seed of David, and of the tribe of Judah. He was born of a sinful creature, and yet without sin; the Holy Ghost having purified it from all defilement, as God alone can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, though man cannot.

3. He was born of a woman. Had there been no more about him but that he had been born of an empress, a sovereign princess, who made a great figure in the world, it would have been very wonderful: but that he was born of any woman at all, be her rank in life what it will, may well strike us with amazement. I shall say no more of this, but that our birth is such as the due consideration of it might humble us all our life; and yet to it Christ humbled himself. O the depth of his humiliation.

4. He was born in a low condition: There were several circumstances of the lowest abasement about the birth of Christ. He was not born of a great princess, seated on a splendid throne, and attended with a brilliant court, but a mean woman, though of the seed-royal of David, and married not to a mighty potentate, but a poor mechanic, a carpenter, Luke i. 48. and that not in her own house, but in that of another; not in the inn, the great house where the richer and more noble company chuse their lodging, there being no room there for him who was born King of the Jews, yea, who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, but in a stable among cattle; and when born, not clothed with embroidered or costly garments, as the children of kings use to be, but swaddled in tattered clothes, rent pieces of a garment, as the original word signifies; and laid not in a servant's bed in the stable, but in a manger, out of which the cattle eat their provender, instead of a cradle, Luke ii. 7. A far lower state of humiliation than most of the sons and daughters of Adam are reduced to. Well may we cry out with astonishment, How low, O Son of God, wast thou humbled in every circumstance relating to thy conception and birth! O that we might study humility from thy low abasement!

SECONDLY, Our Redeemer was made under the law, though he be the Lord of all, and the Lawgiver unto his rational creatures. Rebellious man had shaken off the yoke of obedience, and Christ therefore lays his neck under it. He submitted himself to the ceremonial law, undergoing the



painful operation of circumcision on the eighth day after his birth, as was therein enjoined; to the civil law, paying tribute, &c. ; and to the moral law, obeying the precepts thereof, and suffering the penal sanction of it, which was added in case of transgression by man, in whose room he substituted himself.

1. He submitted to the preceptive part of the law as a covenant of works, which man had broken: and this he fulfilled, so that he was even subject to Joseph his supposed father, and to Mary his Mother, according to the flesh, Luke ii. 51. ; nay, to every branch of it, in fulfilling all righteousness, Matth. iii. 15. By this his obedience the law was magnified and made honourable, and got its full due in respect of active obedience, which it could never have got from men, though all their pieces of obedience had been accumulated into one sum.

2. He submitted to the threatening or penal sanction of the law. Though there was no guile found in his mouth, and he owed the law nothing, as being the great Lawgiver, yet the law took him by the throat, as the undertaker for sinners, saying, 'Pay me what thou owest.' The threatening was enacted, and he answered it to a tittle, bearing that death in his soul and body which it had threatened on account of sin. And thus he took on the debt of elect sinners, and he paid it to the utmost farthing. O wonderful condescension in the Lord and Lawgiver, to yield obedience to his own law, that was made for creatures, in all its demands, the most rigorous not excepted? O blessed Undertaker, who hast paid all the debt of bankrupt men!

THIRDLY, He underwent the miseries of this life, which was infected with the plague of sin, and thereby rendered very grievous to bear; and yet he, though sinless, humbled himself to bear the tokens thereof. As,

1. Poverty: "Though the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, yet he, the Son of man, had not where to lay his head." Adam had reduced all his posterity to beggary, and Christ submitted to the poverty following it; not having wherewith to maintain himself, but receiving supplies from some women who ministered to him of their substance. He was so poor that he had not wherewith to pay the tribute exacted of him till he wrought a miracle for it. In his greatest state, and when attended with the grandest

cavalcade, he was mounted, not on a horse finely caparisoned, but on a silly ass, and that none of his own, but borrowed from another.

2. Sorrow: Isa. liii. 3. He was 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' There was a constant cloud of sorrow on him. Once we read of his rejoicing in spirit, but never of his laughing; frequently of his complaints, tears, and groans. He was content to sorrow for us, that we might rejoice, and to weep that we might be glad.

3. The indignities of the world, in the contempt, reproach, and despite poured upon him. He was despised and rejected of men. Hence he says of himself in this respect, Psal. xxii. 6. 'I am a worm and no man: a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' He was contradicted of sinners, called Beelzebub, a madman, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, &c.

4. The temptations of Satan. He was tempted of the devil forty days in the wilderness and elsewhere: nay tempted to self-murder, and to the worship of that damned spirit, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Satan seems to have often set upon him, though the particular times are not mentioned in the sacred records; as appears from Luke iv. 13. where it is said, that 'the devil departed from him (after his grand temptation) for a season;' denoting that he would attack him again.

5. *Lastly*, The sinless infirmities of human nature. He was subjected to weariness, hunger, thirst, &c. as the history of his life in the evangelist's abundantly declares. Thus low was the Son of God humbled on account of sinners, that they might not perish for ever. O let us admire his humiliation and abasement, and let his low estate for ever hide pride from our eyes, and teach us, in whatever state we are, therewith to be content.

FOURTHLY, He underwent the wrath of God. Thus he humbled himself to drink the bitter dregs of his Father's wrath for us. The curse of the law was laid upon him, and he bore it for us, Gal. iii. 13. His soul was troubled, John xii. 27. He was beset with sorrows of the deepest sort, when he said, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' Matth. xxvi. 38. He was in an agony, so as it made him sweat great drops of blood, that trickled from his blessed body in a cold night in the open air. Whence was all this but

from the load of his Father's wrath that lay on him, on account of all the sins of his elect people imputed to him? a load, which, if laid on all the angels in heaven and men on earth, would have sunk them to the lowest hell. Compare the martyrs quietly bearing the most fearful deaths. They were supported by divine consolations flowing into their souls, without one drop of God's wrath in the cup given them to drink. But from him all divine comforts were withheld. See that desertion of God of which he so bitterly cried out on the cross, when there was an eclipse of comfort from his holy soul, as there was of the sun in his cheering beams from the earth, that he might bear that wrath in full measure. O what an amazing step of humiliation was this! Who knows the power of the Lord's wrath? If fatherly anger made David to roar, and vindictive justice devils to tremble under the fearful apprehensions of the wrath to come upon them, how dreadful behoved that wrath to be which was due to the sins of all the elect, when accumulated in one sum, and all charged upon Christ at once? He was set up as a mark against which all the arrows of the divine wrath were levelled; the quiver thereof was emptied upon him. No wonder then that he was in agony, that blood trickled from every pore of his body, and that his holy human soul recoiled, as it were, from the terrible shock it underwent under this load of wrath and the curse of the law.

FIFTHLY, He underwent the cursed death of the cross. Being betrayed by Judas, forsaken by all his disciples, denied by the self-confident Peter, and condemned by Pilate, he was put to death on the cross. This death of Christ was,

1. Most painful. No death is without pain. But his death was most painful: for 'it pleased the Lord to bruise him.' Consider here,

(1.) Our Lord was scourged, having his blessed back beaten with sharp rods, Matt. xxvii. 26. which was a most shameful and painful thing.

2. He was crowned with thorns; and the mad soldiers struck him on the head, when this prickly crown was on his head, thereby driving the thorns into it, and making them penetrate the deeper, Matt. xxvii. 29, 30. whereby it seems he was so overspread with his own blood, that Pilate thought him already an object of commiseration, and brought him forth to the Jews, saying 'Behold the man,' John xix. 5.



Add to this what he suffered from blows and cuffs laid on him without mercy, and their compelling him to bear his own cross, till, fainting with the heavy load and his inward sufferings, they obliged another to drag it to the place of execution.

(3.) He was crucified; which was a most painful and excruciating death. For consider,

[1.] The extending of his body on the cross, which lying on the ground, his body was with such force stretched out its full length, that his bones were drawn out of joint, as he himself pathetically expresses it in prophetic language, long before the tragical event took place, Psal. xxii. 14. 'My bones are out of joint,' His sinews were distended, and his bones dislocated by the violent distension.

[2.] The nailing of the body so extended unto the cross. These nails were driven through the hands and the feet, the sinewy and most sensible parts of the body; which could not but occasion greater pain to Christ's body, which was of a finer temperature and more acute feeling than the bodies of other men, as being entirely exempted from the corruption and distempers these are liable to. And great indeed it seems they were; for he says, 'they pierced my hands and feet;' in Hebrew they *digged* them, as it were with spades and mattocks, which could not but occasion the most excruciating and acute pain.

[3.] What dreadful pain behoved the lifting up of the cross, with him nailed to it, be to his blessed body, especially if done with a sudden jerk, which we may suppose to have been probably the case, considering the eagerness of his enemies to have him dispatched; and then thrusting it down again into the ground that it might stand upright, attended no doubt with shaking from side to side? Every one may well perceive what dreadful pain must have attended all this horrid scene.

[4.] It was a longsome or lingering death. He hung on the cross about six hours, from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon, Mark xv. 25, 34. What pain behoved to attend such a long suspension on the cross, his blessed body hanging all the while by his hands nailed to the upper part?

2. His death was most shameful and ignominious, Heb. xii. 2. 'He endured the cross, despising the shame.' Much shame was cast on him. They spit upon him, and mocked

him. The death of the cross was a death for bondmen, seldom for freemen, and those only of the baser sort, and for some of the highest crimes. While he was a-dying he stood naked on the cross; for they that were crucified were first stript naked of all their clothes, Matt. xxvii. 35. He was crucified in the midst of two thieves, as if he had been the chief of them, and that without the gate, as the blasphemer was without the camp. They wagged their heads at him. He was mocked in his prophetic office: they blindfolded him, and bad him 'prophesy who smote him.' He was mocked in his priestly office, 'He saved others, but himself he cannot save.' And he was mocked in his kingly office; they cried unto him, 'Hail, King of the Jews;' and this title, 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews,' was inscribed on his cross, as giving him out for a mock monarch.

3. It was a cursed death, Deut. xxi. 23. 'He that is hanged, is accursed of God.' That was but a ceremonial curse, but it was a real one to him, Gal. iii. 13. 'He was made a curse for us.' There were many other kinds of death among the Jews; but that kind only was accursed: and therefore it behoved Christ our surety so to die. It is thought this crucifying of criminals was forbidden in the time of the Emperor Constantine.

SIXTHLY, He was buried, so that there might be full assurance given of his death, upon the reality of which the hopes and happiness of his people depend, inasmuch as thereby transgression was finished, an end put to sin, reconciliation made for iniquity, and everlasting righteousness brought in. He was buried too, that he might conquer death in its darkest and strongest hold, even in the gloomy recesses of the grave; to sanctify and sweeten it to all his friends and followers, that it may be to them a place of repose, where their bodies may rest till the resurrection; that his people may have power and strength to bury sin, so as it may never rise up against them to their condemnation; and to teach his followers to give one another's dead bodies a just and decent interment.

The persons who concerned themselves in our Lord's funeral, were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, John xix. 38,—42. They were rich men, senators, and counsellors in the Jewish state, and of as bright and distinguished characters as any who sat in the sanhedrim; and yet they were so

far from reckoning it a dishonour, that they counted it a piece of singular glory to be employed in this last act of kindness to their dead Lord. Now, when the apostles were all fled, and none of them appeared to shew this respect to their Master, Providence stirred up these two great and rich men to act a part upon this occasion which was truly great and honourable. And those persons were well affected to our Redeemer. Though the weakness of their faith moved them to conceal their profession during his life, yet now, when he is dead, and none of all his followers have the courage to own or concern themselves about him, they boldly appear in acting this part of sincere friends to him.

The place where our Lord was buried was a new sepulchre in a garden, wherein no man had ever been laid, John xix. 41. Thus our Lord was buried not in his own, but in another man's grave. As in the days of his life he was in such circumstances, that he himself said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has not where to lay his head?' so when he was dead he had no grave of his own to be laid in. When he was born, he was born in another man's house; when he preached, he preached in another man's ship; when he prayed, he prayed in another man's garden; when he rode to Jerusalem he rode on another man's ass; and when he was buried, he was buried in another man's grave. He had nothing peculiar to himself but his cross; which no man would touch, far less take from him, even when he was ready to faint under the weight of it, till Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear it. The grave belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, who was a rich man; and thus there was a memorable fulfilment of that prophecy, Isa. liii. 9. 'He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.' Though upon the cross he was insulted and despised, yet he was honourably laid in the grave. It was a new grave; which a wise Providence so ordered, that the Jews might have no ground to surmise, either that some other buried before had risen, or that his resurrection was not the effect of his own power, but of virtue flowing from the body of some saint formerly interred there, as in the case of that dead man, who being let down into the grave of Elisha, and touching his bones, revived, and stood up on his feet, 2 Kings xiii. 21. This grave was in a garden; which Joseph contrived to have so, that it might be a memo-



random to him, while living amidst all the pleasures and products of his garden, to think of death, and to be diligent in preparing for it. In a sepulchre in a garden Christ's body was laid. In the garden of Eden death and the grave received their power, and now in a garden are conquered, disarmed, and triumphed over. In a garden Christ began his passion, and in a garden he would rise and begin his exaltation. Christ fell to the ground as a corn of wheat, John xii. 24. and therefore was sown in a garden among the seeds, for his dew is as the dew of herbs, Isa. xxvi. 19; yea, he is the fountain of gardens, Cant. iv. 15.

As to the manner of our Lord's funeral, several things may be observed.

1. Joseph, inspired with an undaunted courage, went to Pilate, and boldly asked the dead body of Jesus. Though while our Redeemer lived, Joseph was so far sunk under the power of fear and cowardice, that he acted only as his secret disciple, yet now when he is dead, holy boldness and courage rose to such a pitch in his spirit, that he openly asked his body of Pilate, in order to a decent interment. Though he might have formed a party to have carried it off by violence, yet he rather chose to do it in a regular and peaceable manner; and therefore made a dutiful application to Pilate, who was the proper person to be addressed on this occasion, in regard he had the disposal of the body. In things wherein the power of the civil magistrate is concerned, due regard must be had to that power, and nothing done to break in upon it.

2. Upon this application, Pilate very readily granted Joseph the body of Jesus, in order to its being decently interred. Perhaps by this step he imagined to do something towards atoning that guilt wherewith his conscience charged him in condemning an innocent person. But whatever might be in this, it is certain, that, in Joseph's petition and Pilate's ready grant of it, honour was done to Christ, and a testimony borne to his integrity.

3. Joseph having obtained his desire, instantly repaired to the accursed tree, from which he took down the body of Jesus; and mangled and mascerated as it was, carried it in his arms to a place proper for its being dressed. Thus did he act under the prevailing conduct of the deepest and dearest love to his Redeemer.

4. Our Redeemer's body being brought into some adjoin-

ing house, it was washed from blood and dust, and then wound in linen with spices, as the manner of the Jews was. But why did Joseph and Nicodemus make all this ado about the body of Christ? Though perhaps in this their management we may discern the weakness of their faith, for a firm belief of the resurrection of Christ the third day would have saved them this care and cost, and have been more acceptable than all spices; yet herein we may evidently see the strength of their love, together with the value they had for his person and doctrine, which was no way lessened by the reproach of the cross.

5. The time of our Lord's burial was on the day of the preparation, when the Sabbath drew on; and this was the reason that they made such haste with the funeral. Though they were in tears for the death of Christ, yet they did not forget the work of an approaching Sabbath; but set themselves with all convenient speed and care to prepare for it.

6. The company who attended our Redeemer's funeral, was not any of the disciples, but only the women who came with him from Galilee, who, as they staid by him while he hung upon the cross, so they followed him all in tears, beheld the sepulchre where it was, which was the way to it, and how his body was laid in it: and all this they were led to, not by their curiosity, but by their affection to the Lord Jesus, which was strong as death, cruel as the grave, and which many waters could not quench.

7. The Redeemer's funeral was actually solemnized; for after all the above circumstances were over, then they acted as is related, John xix. 41, 42. 'Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews preparation day, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. 'There laid they Jesus,' i. e. the dead body of Jesus. Some think that the calling of that *Jesus* intimates the inseparable union between the divine and human natures in his blessed person. Even this dead body was Jesus a Saviour; for his death is our life. Thus, without pomp or solemnity, is the body of Jesus laid in the cold and silent grave. Here lies our Surety arrested for our debt; so that if he be released, his discharge will be ours. Here is the Sun of righteousness set for a while, to rise again in greater glory, and set no more. Here lies a seeming cap-

tive to death, but a real conqueror over death. Yea here lies death itself slain, and the grave conquered: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

SEVENTHLY, Our Redeemer continued under the power of death for a time. 'For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,' Matth. xii. 40. For clearing the import of Christ's continuing under the power of death for a time, consider,

1. That death hath a very strange and strong power in the world, which invades and prevails against all the children of men. 'For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?' says the Psalmist. This interrogation plainly imports, that no man, high or low, great or small, rich or poor, can possibly cover himself from the stroke of death. And no wonder; for as the apostle tells us, 'death hath reigned from Adam,' Rom. v. 14. The empire of death hath made an universal spread through the face of the earth, and, with an unrelenting fury, bears all the sons of men before it. And it is no way strange it be so, seeing it acts under the conduct of Heaven's irrevocable decree, 'It is appointed unto men once to die,' Heb. ix. 27.

2. That the empire, power, and dominion of death, was introduced into the world by sin, Rom. v. 12. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The wages of sin is death.' And therefore man no sooner gave into apostasy from his Maker, but the awful sentence went forth, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' Gen. iii. 19.

3. That our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of life, fell under the power of death, and that in its most frightful and amazing form: for he died the painful, the cursed, the shameful, and lingering death of the cross; and this he did not by constraint, but with the utmost cheerfulness.

4. That it was for the sins of his elect people that the Lord of life came under the power of death. Their sins were imputed to him: 'He was made sin for us,' says the apostle, 'who knew no sin.' Because their sins were imputed to him, therefore death, the punishment of sin, came upon him. He was not only wounded for our transgressions, and bruised



for our iniquities, but he died for our sins. He bare the sins of many; and for the transgressions of his people was he stricken, yea, stricken even unto death.

5. That though our Redeemer continued under the power of death, yet it was only for a time. Though this king of terrors brought the King of glory down to the gloomy shades of the grave, yet he could not hold him long there. Hence the apostle says, Acts ii. 24. 'God loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' Christ was imprisoned for our debt, and thrown into the hands of death; but divine justice being satisfied, it was not possible that he should be detained there, either by right or by force; for he had life in himself, and in his own power, and had conquered the prince of death.

6. That the time of our Redeemer's being under the power of death was only till the third day. For he rose the third day after his death; which was the time he had often prefixed, and he kept within it. He was buried in the evening of the sixth day of the week, and rose in the morning of the first day of the following week; so that he lay in the grave about thirty-six or thirty-eight hours. He lay so long, to shew that he was really and truly dead, and no longer, that he might not see corruption.

If it should be asked, What were the reasons and ends of this amazing humiliation of the Son of God? I answer, That *Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

1. That he might satisfy divine justice in the room and stead of an elect world. When man by sin rebelled against his rightful Lord, incensed justice called aloud for vengeance upon the atrocious offender; and had its rigorous demands been answered, all the race of mankind had perished in the depths of death and damnation for ever. But Christ, by the whole scene of his humiliation, has so fully answered all its demands of his chosen, that it can crave no more. For he, by his obedience and satisfaction, as the Surety of unjust sinners, has so perfectly paid all their debt, that justice is completely atoned and pacified. Hence our Redeemer drew his last breath on the cross with these words, 'It is finished.'

2. To confirm and seal his testament. He had bequeathed many great and glorious legacies to his chosen; all which had failed for ever, if by his death he had not ratified and

confirmed this his testament. 'For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth,' Heb. ix. 16, 17. Wherefore, that our Lord's testament might in that respect be made good, he sealed it with his heart's blood: 'This cup,' says he, 'is the new testament in my blood,' i. e. the new testament, which is ratified by my blood.

3. To conquer and subdue the devil. This malicious and subtil enemy of mankind had by his craft and power brought the whole race of Adam in subjection to his empire, reigning over and leading them captive at his pleasure. But our Lord through death destroyed him that had the power of death. It is true, the crucifying of Jesus was the devil's plot; for he put Judas upon betraying him, the Jews upon accusing him, Pilate upon condemning him, and the soldiers upon executing him. But our Lord outshot him in his own bow, and snared and took him in his own hands. Thus the devil, by plotting and pushing on the death of the Son of God, to prevent his own ruin, procured and promoted it.

4. To finish transgression, and put an end to sin, yea, to take away sin with all its direful effects, Rom. viii. 3. 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.' For when an elect world lay sunk under the guilt of sin, captives under the power of it, yile under the pollution of it, undone under the weight of it, and most miserable under the baneful effects of it, Jesus humbled himself to the death on purpose to rescue and deliver them from all this. 'We have redemption through his blood,' says Paul, 'even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace.' And says another apostle, 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

5. To deliver his people from the curse of a broken law, and the wrath of God. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Gal. iii. 13. 'Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come,' 1 Thess. i. 10. When all the curses of the law were marching forth, as it were in battle-array, against the children of Adam, and the dreadful wrath of an Almighty God was ready to pour in upon them, then did our Lord step in, and, by his deeply

debased birth, life, and death, divert the furious storm from his chosen, so that not one curse, or the least drop of wrath, shall ever fall to their share.

6. *Lastly*, That in due time he might bring all his people to the complete possession of immortal glory. When he saw them wallowing and sinking in the depths of sin and iniquity; when he saw them exposed to eternal death and damnation by reason of sin, and when he took a view of them as absolutely unable to do any thing towards their own relief and deliverance, his soul pitied them, and his bowels of compassion yearned upon them; so that in their stead he satisfied divine justice, subdued their enemies, abolished sin and death, rescued them from hell and wrath, and prepared for them eternal life and glory,

I shall conclude with a few inferences.

1. Here see the love of Christ in its most distinguishing glory. For the deeper he debased and the lower he humbled himself, the higher did he raise, and the more clearly did he manifest his love, What heart can conceive, what tongue can express, the greatness of this love; It is love without a precedent or parallel. It passeth knowledge.

2. Here see the awful and tremendous severity of divine justice, which no less could satisfy than the Son of God's humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Its resentment against sin swelled so high, that nothing could appease it, or move it to let go the criminal offenders, till the Son of God fell an expiatory sacrifice to it. And when the time of its acting this bloody tragedy upon our Redeemer came on, it would not forego nor abate one tittle of its demands. It would not spare him in one article of suffering which it could exact of him.

3. See here the prodigious evil of sin. Though the generality of men look upon it with a very light and easy eye; though they account it a very small matter to break in upon the divine law, and to transgress the bounds which the great God has fixed therein; yet whoever duly reflects upon the deep humiliation and sorrowful sufferings of Christ, will entertain quite other thoughts about it. Of all evils sin is infinitely the worst. Though a holy and just God has given many severe and terrible testimonies of his displeasure against sin, yet none of them appear with such an amazing awe as



that which appears in the humiliation, death, and sufferings of his dear Son.

4. Let this look the pride of our hearts out of countenance; and let us think nothing too mean or low for us, whereby the glory of God and the good of others may be advanced. For Christ humbled himself deeper and lower than any ever did or can do, to procure the favour of God to sinners, to magnify the divine law and make it honourable; and therein hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps.

5. Let this teach you highly to prize the salvation purchased by Christ, and offered to sinners in the gospel. Say not of the sufferings of Christ, by your slighting the redemption thereby procured, What needs all this waste? Surely sin must be of a more malignant nature, the justice of God more exact and rigorous, souls more precious, and salvation and mercy more difficult to obtain, than is ordinarily imagined. Take a view of Christ in his amazing humiliation and heavy sufferings, and see if ye can entertain those thoughts.

6. Let impenitent sinners and rejecters of Christ tremble. Was this done in the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? If Christ, when he became a sinner only by imputation was exposed to such heavy sufferings as would have sunk millions of men and angels, what shall be the fate of those who spurn at his love, reject the offers of his grace and mercy, and refuse to accept of his salvation? What can they expect, but that the wrath of God shall come upon them to the uttermost, and they shall undergo the sorest punishment that incensed and insulted justice can inflict?

7. Accept of Jesus Christ as he offers himself in the gospel. He is willing to receive sinners, nay, the very worst and most abandoned of them, or he had not swimm'd through a sea of blood to catch them. O! be not despisers, but cheerful and willing receivers, of him who has written his love and good will to you in characters of blood.

8. Revenge the death of Christ on your lusts and idols. Give no quarter to, nor suffer them to live, that were the cause of his most humiliating and ignominious death. To cherish any sin or lust, is a high indignity done to the Son of God, and as it were a crucifying him afresh. O! then fly from every sin, account it your enemy, and Christ's enemy; and shew your love to the Redeemer, who humbled

himself so deeply for you, by doing whatsoever he commands you, and avoiding all appearance of evil.

9. *Lastly*, Grudge not to part with any thing for Christ. He left the bosom of his Father, laid aside the robes of his glory, and exposed himself to the severest hardships and most intolerable sufferings, that you might not perish for ever? and will ye refuse any thing for his sake? Ye have no reason to shift his cross, or decline to take on his yoke, when he suffered on the accursed cross to procure your deliverance from everlasting wrath and burnings.

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OF CHRIST'S EXALTATION.

PHIL. ii. 9, 10, 11.—*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**H**AVING spoke to the several parts of our blessed Redeemer's state of humiliation, I come now to treat of the several branches of his exaltation, or that high dignity and glory to which he is exalted, as the reward of his suffering even unto death. This bright Sun set as it were in a cloud, but he rose again, surrounded with the brightest rays of the most exalted glory and splendour. This exaltation is held forth very expressly in the text, which, as it is opposed to his death, includes his resurrection, or releasement from the grave. God has not only exalted him, but super-exalted him above the earth in his ascension. The name above every name which is given him, is the same in effect with his sitting at the right hand of God. The bowing of the knee is that acknowledgement of this power, dignity, and authority of Christ, by angels, men, and devils; the great evidence of which shall be at the last day, Rom. xiv. 10, 11. 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' For it is written, 'As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall consider the several steps of our Lord's exaltation, as they are laid

down from the scriptures in our Catechism, viz. 'his rising from the dead on the third day, his ascending up into heaven, his sitting at the right-hand of God the Father, and his coming to judge the world at the last day.'

I. The first step of his exaltation was his resurrection, his rising out of the grave. Concerning this, consider the following things.

1. The nature of it. His resurrection was not the re-uniting of his divine to his human nature, for death had not separated that union, as I have formerly shewn; but his re-uniting his soul to his body, taking that life again which he had before laid down, John x. 17. And it was the very same body for substance which was crucified; it was the very same body that fell under death that rose again. It had been laid in the grave mangled and macerated with blows, stripes, and wounds; but in his resurrection the deformity thereby occasioned was removed, and nothing but the prints of the nails remained; as appears from John xx. 25, 27.

2. The truth of his resurrection. Christ truly rose again, This truth was attested by the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre, as ye will find, Matth. xxviii. 11—15. though the elders took care to smother the effect thereof. His friends bore the most ample testimony to it; such as the women who came to anoint his dead body, his disciples and many others. To these, 'he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs,' Acts. i. 3. And we are told, 1 Cor. xv. 6. that 'he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.' The evangelists are unanimous in this matter. This truth is also manifest from the person's being God, who could not be confined in a grave, and the many miracles wrought to confirm it, evincing him to be alive, and reigning in glory.

3. The necessity of his resurrection. It was necessary he should rise from the dead.

(1.) That the scripture might be fulfilled, 1 Cor. xv. 4. which cannot be broken. See Psal. xvi. 10. 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the state of the dead); neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.' This passage is expressly applied to the resurrection of Christ, Acts ii. 31. and xiii. 35. And it was prophesied of him: Isa. liii. 10. 'He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.' A



notable type of it was Jonah's coming out of the whale's belly, Matth. xii. 40.

(2.) In respect of the dignity and glory of his person. He was the true God and eternal life. How was it then possible, that he should be holden by death? Acts ii. 24.

(3.) In respect of his Mediatory office, which would have been broken if he had not risen again. He was to reign for ever, Psal. xlv. 7. Luke i. 32; to intercede as a Priest for ever, Psal. cx. 4. and therefore to enter into the holiest of all, after he had expiated our sins by his blood.

(4.) In respect of our salvation. If Christ had not risen, all the elect's hopes of heaven had rotted in the grave for ever: 1 Cor. xv. 17. 'If Christ be not raised, (says the apostle), your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.' His resurrection was the life of his death, and had he not by his resurrection overcome death; it would for ever have devoured us also.

4. The time of his resurrection, the third day. He was crucified on Friday afternoon, and he arose early on the first day of the week, which has from that event been called the Lord's day, and observed as the Christian Sabbath in all the churches of Christ. This period was long enough to confirm the truth of his death. His body did not corrupt in the grave, Psal. xvi. 10. Acts xiii. 37. Nor was it ever after mortal, but put on immortality, Rom. vi. 9. 'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.' This was one difference betwixt Christ's resurrection and that of Lazarus, who rose again only to a mortal life.

5. The author of his resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is ascribed to himself, and we are firmly to believe that he rose by his own power, John. ii. 19. 'Destroy this temple, (says he), and in three days I will raise it up.' John x. 17. 'I lay down my life, that I might take it again. And this the scripture insists upon as an argument of the divinity of Christ, Rom. i. 4. where he is said to be 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:' which must needs be thus understood; for Lazarus also was raised; yet no such thing followed on it. It is ascribed also unto the Father, Rom. vi. 4. But there is no inconsistency here: for whatsoever the Father doth, the Son also doth the

same, the external works of the Trinity being common to each person. The reason why Christ's resurrection is ascribed to the Father, is, that he acted therein as a judge, letting out the prisoner when the debt was paid.

6. The manner of our Lord's resurrection.

(1) It was ushered in with a terrible earthquake, Matth. xxviii. 2. 'Behold, there was a great earthquake.' As the earth shook and trembled at our Lord's passion, so did it also at his glorious resurrection from the dead. This was an extraordinary and miraculous shaking of the earth, proceeding immediately from the divine power, as the eclipse of the sun which happened during his passion. It was a sign of triumph, and a token of victory, by which our Lord intimated to the whole world, that he had overcome death in its own dominions, and lifted up his head as a glorious conqueror above all his enemies. He came out of the grave with great solemnity, and marched out of the bloody field with a pomp and majesty becoming the dignity of Heaven's champion.

(2.) Christ in his resurrection was attended by some of the courtiers of heaven, Matt. xxviii. 2. 'An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.' Christ's power was not confined to the grave or the earth, but extended to heaven and all the host of it. Though the chief priests and Pharisees conspired together to keep him close shut up in the grave, sealed the stone which was rolled to the door of it, set a watch, and made all things as sure as they possibly could, yet one of the heavenly host by a touch baffled all their measures. The angel of the Lord rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. This action speaks a secure triumph over all the obstructions of Christ's resurrection. He sat on the stone, defying all the powers of hell to roll the stone to the grave again: and he sat as a guard to the grave; for having frightened away the enemy's black guard, he sat expecting the women to give them an account of our Lord's resurrection, as he very pathetically did, ver. 6. 'He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay.'

(3.) He laid aside all the ensigns of mortality and death: for he stript himself of the grave-clothes, and left them behind him, John xx. 5, 6, 7. The reasons of this laying them aside might be these. [1.] Because he rose to die no

more. Lazarus came out with his grave-clothes on, because he was to die again; but Christ rising to an immortal life, came out free from all these incumbrances. [2.] Because he was going to be clothed with robes of glory. [3.] He left these clothes in the grave, as it were for the use of his people. For if the grave be a bed to the saints, he hath thus sheeted it, and made it ready for them, that in it they may lie quietly and easily till the morning of the resurrection, when they shall enter into the full and eternal possession of the glory that is to be revealed. These grave-clothes were found in very good order; which shews that his body was not stolen away when the watch slept, as the chief priests and elders foolishly bade them say. Robbers of tombs have been known to take away the clothes and leave the body; but none ever took away the body, and left the clothes, especially when they were made of fine linen and new.

(4.) Christ's resurrection was attended with that of many others, Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. 'The graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.' Here observe, (1.) Who they were that rose. They are expressly called *saints*, persons sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God: for such only shall rise by the virtue and power of Christ's resurrection. Who they were, whether the ancient patriarchs, the Old Testament martyrs, or more modern saints, who lived in Christ's time, but died before him, cannot be determined. (2.) That their number was considerable; they are called *many*. The benefits of our Lord's resurrection extends to many. (3.) The time of their rising was posterior to Christ's resurrection. For though before this the earth did quake, the rocks rend, and the graves were opened, yet none of them stirred out of these dark mansions till Christ was risen. It is in virtue of Christ's resurrection, that the bodies of all the saints shall in the fulness of time rise again. (4.) They went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. They did not appear to all the people, but to many; but whether friends or enemies, in what manner they appeared, how often, what they did and said, and how they disappeared, are secret things, not to be known. It is very probable, however, that the great design of their appearing to so many was to bear testimony to the truth and certainty, to the power and



glory of our Redeemer's resurrection. [5.] What became of these saints afterwards, is a question not easy to be determined. Some are of opinion, that as they rose only to bear witness of Christ's resurrection to those to whom they appeared, so having finished this their work, they retired to their graves again. But it seems to be more agreeable both to the Redeemer's honour and theirs, to suppose, that they rose, as he did, to die no more, and therefore ascended with him into glory.

7. The fruits of Christ's resurrection. Amongst many, I only name the following.

(1.) It is an argument of his having made complete satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of his people, John xvi. 10. When the just Judge opens the prison door, it says that the prisoner's debt is fully paid, and he has received satisfaction for all demands from him. Christ's resurrection was in effect a discharge of all the debt he had taken upon him to pay.

(2.) It is an argument, that the bodies of the elect shall be raised at the last day, 1 Cor. xv. 20. 'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.' If Christ has risen, the power of death is broken. And the same Spirit dwells in his members, Rom. viii. 11. And all the benefits of the covenant shall be made forthcoming, seeing he is alive to become executor of his own testament.

(3.) The duty of believers flowing from this is to walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. They are to rise from the grave of sin, and to put on the robes of true holiness. Dead sinners are not fit members of a living head.

II. Christ ascended into heaven, the seat of the blessed. Concerning this, let us observe,

1. In what respect he ascended. Not in respect of his divine nature, for that can change no place, and is confined to no place; but in respect of his human nature, which is so present in one place, that it cannot be in another at the same time, and it changeth one place for another by local motion. It was his human body that ascended into heaven, and which the heavens must contain till the time of the restitution of all things.

2. The reality of his ascension. He did not merely disappear, but by a local motion went up from the earth into the

highest heavens, leaving the one, and going to the other. And he ascended in a visible manner, before the eyes of his disciples.

3. The time of it, which was forty days after his resurrection, Acts i. 2, 3. This his long stay on the earth was the blessed effect of his matchless and unparalleled love to his church and people. Though ineffable glory was prepared and waiting for him in heaven, yet he would not go to possess it till he had ordered all things aright that concerned the good of his followers here on earth. More particularly, he staid so long on earth,

(1.) That he might the more convincingly testify unto his disciples the truth of his humanity, and confirm them in the faith of his being truly man.

(2.) To confirm them still the more strongly in the faith of his resurrection from the dead. This was a truth which the disciples were not easily induced to believe. Hence when they first heard it from Mary Magdalene, and the other women that had been at the sepulchre, it is said, that 'their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not,' Luke xxiv. 11. But his staying so long on the earth, and frequently conversing with them, gave them full assurance of the reality of his resurrection. He showed himself alive to them by many infallible proofs. He walked and talked with them, ate and drank with them. He again and again shewed them the marks of the wounds in his hands, and feet, and side; which was the utmost proof the thing was capable of or required. Besides, it was not one or two, but many proofs which he gave them of this; for he was seen by them forty days; not indeed constantly residing with them, but frequently appearing to them, and bringing them by degrees to be fully satisfied of the truth of his resurrection.

(3.) To instruct them more clearly and perfectly in the knowledge of the mysteries of his kingdom, which after his departure they were to preach and propagate through the world. He had given them a general idea of that kingdom, and of the time when it should be set up, in the parable of the vineyard, Mark xii.; but upon this occasion he let them more clearly into the nature of it, as a kingdom of grace in this world, and of glory in that which is to come; and no doubt opened to them that covenant which is the great charter by which it is incorporated. Thus our Lord did not

entertain his disciples with discourses about politics in the kingdoms of men, about philosophy in the kingdom of nature, but about pure divinity and his spiritual kingdom, which were matters of greatest concern, both to themselves and to those to whom they were in a little time to preach.

4. The manner of our Lord's ascension.

(1.) He ascended not figuratively and metaphorically, but really and corporally, by a local translation of his human nature from the earth to the highest heavens. He ascended from a mount, an high and eminent place, to ascertain his disciples of the truth of his ascension. He did not withdraw himself from them as at other times, but ascended openly in the view of them all, they looking stedfastly toward heaven as he went up. He ascended from the Mount of Olives, that he might enter on his glory nigh the place where he began his sufferings, and the last tragical scene of his life. It was at this mount that his heart was made sad; for there he began to be sorrowful and sore amazed: and it was there also that his heart was made glad, and filled with ineffable and triumphant joy. The same place afforded him a passage both to his cross and to his crown; for there his sorrows and sufferings began, and from thence he ascended into heaven.

(2.) He ascended while he was blessing his disciples. He blessed them as one having authority; yea, commanded the blessing upon them. And while he was so employed, he was parted from them, to intimate that his being so did not put an end to his blessing of them, but that his privilege was to be continued with them by virtue of his powerful intercession for them in heaven. The first tidings of our Redeemer's birth were attended with praises to God and blessings to men: he began his public ministry with pronouncing blessings on certain characters, Matth. v.; when he died, he breathed out his soul in blessings to his enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;' and just when he was leaving the world, he was translated with a blessing in his mouth.

(3.) He ascended powerfully, even by his own almighty power. As by the power of his eternal Godhead he broke through the gloomy shades of the grave, and rose again to an immortal life; so by the same almighty strength he went gloriously up through the yielding air into the bright regions of eternal light. Enoch and Elijah were both translated soul



and body into heaven ; but this was not by their own, but by a divine power which exerted itself upon that occasion, by the ministry of angels. But our Redeemer went up upon the wings of his own almighty power.

(4.) He ascended softly and gradually. Though his conduct in this matter could not but strike with a strong surprise upon the minds of his disciples, yet his motion was so plain, easy, and distinct, that it fell very clearly under their observation ; for while they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' Thus he departed by little and little, and not in a rapturous haste.

(5.) He ascended in a glorious and triumphant manner.

[1.] There was a cloud prepared as his royal chariot to carry him up to his princely palace. A cloud, in the natural notion of it, is a thick and moist vapour, drawn up from the earth or sea, by the heat of the sun, to the middle region of the air, where it is further condensed, congealed, and thickened, by the coldness of the place, and so hangs or moves like a huge mountain in the midst of the air, partly from natural causes, the sun or the wind, but especially by supernatural ones, the mighty power and appointment of God, who is said to use the clouds as princes do horses of state or chariots of triumph to ride on. Thus he descended in a cloud to Moses, and proclaimed the name of the Lord, *Exod. xxxiv. 5.* ; and it is said, *Isa. xix. 1.* 'Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud.' We find the clouds were serviceable to our Redeemer: for a bright cloud overshadowed him at his transfiguration ; he was carried up in a cloud to heaven at his ascension ; and at the last day the clouds will be the chariots which will bring him to judgment. Hereby Christ discovered himself to be the Lord of all the creatures. He had already trampled upon the earth, walked upon the sea, vanquished hell and the grave ; and now he makes the clouds his chariots, and rides upon the wings of the wind.

(2.) In his ascension he was attended with a bright and blessed retinue of glorious angels. These angelic spirits graced the solemnity of his birth with anthems of triumphant joy ; they ministered to him at the conclusion of his forty days temptation by the devil ; when he was exposed to his amazing agony in the garden the evening before his crucifixion, they waited on him ; and now, when he is making his triumphant entrance into glory, their presence adds to the

glorious solemnity of the happy day. To this we may add, that it is not an improbable supposition, that on this grand occasion he was attended with the company of those many saints that rose from the dead after his resurrection; whom he carried along with him, not only to grace the solemnity of his ascension, but as the first-fruits of his triumph over death and the grave, and a demonstrative evidence that the rest should follow in due time.

(3.) He went to heaven as a glorious conqueror, triumphing over all his enemies. 'When he ascended upon high,' says the apostle, 'he led captivity captive,' Eph. iv. 8. As conquerors of old in their solemn triumphs used to lead their captives fettered with iron chains; so Christ having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them, Col. ii. 15. Some think that at Christ's ascension there was some real visible triumph, some open pomp and shew, in which the devils were led as chained captives through the air; which was visible, not to all, but to God, the angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. But whatever be in this, it is certain that Christ fought and overcame all his enemies; he gave them the last blow upon the cross, he seized on the spoil at his resurrection, and led them in triumph at his ascension into heaven, and by his peaceable possession of his throne his subjects enjoy the benefit of all.

(4.) He ascended into heaven with shouts and acclamations of great joy, Psal. xlvii. 5. 'God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.' Hence, (1.) His ascension was celebrated with the acclamations of angels. If they sang so cheerfully when they came to proclaim his birth, O what shouts and jubilations were heard among them when they accompanied him in his triumphant entrance into heaven! The whole city of God was moved at his coming; the very heavens resounded, and echoed their acclamations of joy. Hence is that passage, Psal. xxiv. 7. 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.' The entry of a mighty and victorious prince is there described; and so it is proper unto Christ: they applaud him there as a mighty conqueror, newly returned from the spoils of his enemies. (2.) The blessed saints make the like applauses, as the prophet describes it, Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. 'Who is this

that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.' There is here a dialogue between Christ and the saints, to express their acclamations at his victory. They are represented as filled with admiration at his glorious triumphs over all his enemies; and they celebrate his victorious return from so bloody a battle, like a great and valiant general, gloriously adorned with rich robes and royal apparel, and besprinkled with the blood of his implacable enemies. (3.) God testifies his approbation of what Christ had done, by giving him a kindly welcome home to heaven, Psal. cx. 1. 'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool:' As if he had said, 'Thy work is well done, Son, thou art welcome home to glory; sit now at my right hand,' &c. And on this account it is said, Dan. vii. 13. 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him.' This vision of Christ was accomplished in his ascension. The holy angels bring him to the Father, called here, 'the Ancient of Days,' who gloriously rewards him for his toil and travel on earth, and his bloody sufferings in accomplishing the work of man's redemption, and receives him as it were with open arms, rejoicing exceedingly to see him again in heaven; and therefore he is said to be 'received up into glory,' 1 Tim. iii. 16.

(6.) He ascended into Heaven in a most munificent manner, bestowing many royal gifts and blessings upon his people. Hence says the apostle, Eph. iv. 8. 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' The apostle here refers to Psal. lxviii. 18. 'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.' There is here an allusion to the ancient customs of princes



or generals, who, after some glorious achievements, or victories, used to mount their triumphant chariot, and enter into their royal cities attended by their captive enemies, and afterwards to distribute gifts to their subjects and soldiers. Thus Christ, at his glorious ascension, when he entered heaven with solemn triumph, bestowed many rich and inestimable gifts upon men, to fit and qualify them for the work of the ministry, and to edify his mystical body. Some of these gifts were extraordinary, as the gifts of tongues and miracles, which were necessary and very useful in the first ages of Christianity. Others, again, were ordinary, and are to continue to the end of the world. And these are of various kinds. To some he gives depths of learning and a profound judgment; to others a gaining elocution; to some a mighty pathos, and melting influence upon the affections, and to others a forcible power of arguing. But they are all designed to gain souls to Christ, and promote the interests of his kingdom.

5. Why, or for what ends Christ ascended into heaven.

1. That he might be solemnly inaugurated and installed in glory. This was due unto him by Mediatory compact. He was to drink of the brook in the way, and therefore should he lift up his head. This was the order that God appointed for his exaltation. The combat was to precede his triumph. He was first to suffer, and then to enter into glory. Hence we read, 1 Pet. i. 11. that 'the Spirit did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' His triumphant laurel grew upon the thorns of his cross, and received a verdure from his dying tears. The palms spread in his way at his entrance into Jerusalem a little before his death, are regarded by some as an emblem of this, it being the nature of that plant to grow and increase the higher by the weights that are hung upon it. For so did our blessed Lord rise to a more glorious and triumphant height by his heavy pressures.

(2.) To make way for the Spirit. For if Christ had not gone away, the Comforter had not come. This plentiful effusion of the Spirit was very necessary to fit and qualify the apostles for propagating the gospel through the world. Such weak and illiterate men as they generally were, could not have managed so great a work without a mighty magazine of divine eloquence and vigorous courage. It was therefore

needful that our great High Priest should enter into the holy place, and appear before God with the blood of his sacrifice ; that the treasures of the Spirit might be opened, and that the divine flame might issue out thence to inspire them with abilities for so great an undertaking.

(3.) To plead and make intercession for his people. After he had shed his precious blood on the earth for the expiation of their sin, he rose again from the dead, and went up into heaven as their Advocate and Intercessor, that, by the virtue of his meritorious sacrifice, he might answer all the charges brought against them, and sue out all the good things promised to them.

(4.) To prepare mansions of glory for all his followers, John xiv. 2. These were indeed prepared for them from all eternity, in the immutable purpose and decree of God, and from the foundation of the world by his creative power. But they were further prepared by Christ's ascension. And this lies in the following particulars. [1.] By this he set open the gates of heaven, that poor sinners might enter in. He removed all the bars and obstructions that were in the way, and made a patent passage for them into glory. [2.] He hath as a public person taken possession of the celestial kingdom in their name. On this account he is called ' the forerunner,' Heb. vi. 20. [3.] He prepares it for his people, in his sanctifying and purifying it for them. This was typified of old by the sprinkling the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, with the blood of the sacrifices. Hence it is said, Heb. ix. 23, 24. ' It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these ; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true ; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' We are not to think that heaven was polluted, and so under any necessity of being made clean : but the cry of man's sin had ascended up on high, as it were with a stinking savour ; and therefore Christ behoved to go up and perfume it with his precious merit. [4.] He prepares it for his people, in providing and fitting all things for their entertainment against they come ; as Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare for his father Jacob.

*Lastly,* The duty that this lays on all that pretend interest

in Christ. (1.) Let our hearts be there where our Lord is. Hence is that exhortation, Col. iii. 1, 2, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.' Let us not be pursuing earthly things as our treasure, but live in this world as those whose heads are homeward, to the house prepared by their ascended Lord. (2.) Let us thence be encouraged to encounter with magnanimity and courage all difficulties that we may meet with in our Christian course and warfare; knowing that we shall be conquerors at last through him that loved us. Christ fought his way to the glory promised him through legions of armed hosts; and so must we, if we would be conformed to him as our Head: he has reached to the crown as the reward of his obedience and sufferings; and so shall we if we follow on in his strength: 'Let us,' therefore, 'lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,' Heb. xii. 1.

III. The third step of our Lord's exaltation, is his sitting at the right hand of God.

This phrase, 'the right hand of God,' Heb. i. 3. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. i. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 22. is not to be taken properly, but in a figurative sense. For God being a pure spirit, is void of all bodily parts. When it is said, that Christ sits at God's right-hand, it is a borrowed expression, wherein the Lord is pleased to condescend to the weakness of our capacities, to the end we may form suitable thoughts of that glorious and exalted state into which Christ is advanced in the heavens. The phrase is wholly metaphorical, taken from the custom of kings and princes, who use to place those at their right hands, and next to themselves, upon whom they would confer the chief marks of favour and honour. More particularly, the right hand denotes,

1. Majesty and honour. It is the place we confer upon those we highly esteem. Thus, Solomon placed his mother at his right-hand, when he was set on his royal throne, 2 Kings ii. 19. And it is said of the church, the spouse of Christ, to denote the honour that he puts upon her, that 'she is at his right-hand,' Psal. xlv. 9. 'Upon thy right-hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.' So God, in testimony of the great honour and esteem that he puts upon



Christ as Mediator, hath set him at his right-hand, which on this account is called 'the right hand of the Majesty on high,' Heb. i. 3.

2. His power. Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxxvii. 10. 'I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right-hand of the Most High.' There we find God's power under the metonymy of *a right hand*, opposed to the infirmity of his servant. 'My infirm and weak faith (saith Asaph) made me apt to sink under the weight of Heaven's displeasure; but when I called to mind my sweet experiences of the divine power which had been exerted for my deliverance in former distresses, this revived my spirit, and refreshed me again,

Christ's 'sitting at the right-hand of God,' implies the following things.

1. A state of rest, Micah iv. 4. 'They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree.' Christ had a troublesome life while in the world; but now that he has finished the work the Father gave him to do, 'he has for ever sat down at the right hand of God,' Heb. x. 12. and is thereby set beyond the reach of men and devils. While here, they would give him no rest from his cradle to his grave; but now they may tear his picture, and persecute his members, but they cannot reach his person.

2. Continuance in that state, 2 Kings vii. 3. 'Why sit we here until we die?' said the four leprous men at the gate of Samaria. The days of sorrow that he met with on earth shall never recur; his crown shall flourish on his head, and his kingdom stand firm and be established.

His 'sitting at God's right hand' denotes,

1. The accomplishment of that work, and the consummation of all those offices, which he was to perform on the earth for the redemption of elect sinners. For till all this was finished, he was not to return to his glory. 'For he that hath entered into his rest, hath ceased from his works, as God did from his,' Heb. iv. 10.

2. The great delight and satisfaction that the Father had in Christ, and in that glorious work which he had finished. When he returned from earth to heaven, the Father welcomed him with the greatest testimony of satisfaction and joy, 'Sit thou on my right hand,' &c. Psal. cx. 1.

3. The great honour and dignity to which he is advanced

in heaven. While he was here on earth, he veiled his divinity with the infirmities of the flesh, and lived in a mean and low condition: but now he is exalted to the highest honour. In this respect he hath bestowed more honour upon his own Son as Mediator, than ever he did on any creature: for, as it is said, Heb. i. 13. 'To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?'

4. His being invested with sovereign dominion and supreme authority and power. 'God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name,' Phil. ii 9. 10. 'He hath set him at his own right-hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, &c. 'Thou madest him a little lower than the angels,' i. e. in respect of his state of humiliation on the earth; 'thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the work of thy hands and hast put all things in subjection under his feet, Heb. ii. 7, 8.

It is Christ as Mediator that sits at the Father's right-hand. With respect to his divine nature, which in the days of his flesh was as a bottle in the smoke, apparently sullied and veiled, it now breaks forth in all its essential glory and splendour. And with regard to his human nature, which while tabernacling here bore the likeness of sinful flesh, and had nothing more engaging in it than that of other men to outward aspect, it has obtained a glory far superior to all creatures, even the very angels being made subject to the man Christ.

The ends for which our Redeemer sitteth at the right hand of God are these following.

1. That, as a mighty King, he may protect and defend his church and people, against the rage of all their enemies, both temporal and spiritual, Isa. xxxii. 1, 2. Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27.

2. That he may subdue all the enemies of his kingdom and people, the devil with all his retinue, the world, the flesh, sin, and hell, Psal. cx. 1. Acts ii. 36. Heb. x. 12, 13. 1 Cor. xv. 25.

3. That with royal munificence he may dispense unto all his faithful subjects all those gifts and graces that may qualify them for the fruition of that glory that is to be revealed, Acts v. 31.

3. That he may act the part of a powerful Intercessor for them, Rom. viii. 34.

5. That all his friends and followers may with him be translated into heaven, and advanced unto a glorious state, being made kings and priests unto God, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. Rev. iii. 21.

USE. Behold here the great difference between our Redeemer's state while here on earth, and what it is now in heaven. How wonderfully is the scene changed! When he was on earth, he lodged in a stable, but now he reigns in a royal palace. Then he had a manger for his cradle, but now he sits in a chair of state. While here he was hated and scorned by men, but now he is adored by angels. Here his name was reproached and reviled, but there he hath a name above every name. Here he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; but now he is anointed with the oil of gladness, and filled with inexpressible delight and joy. While here he seemed to have no form or comeliness why he should be desired; but now he is manifestly the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Here he lay grovelling upon the ground, sweetening drops of clotted blood; but there he sits upon a royal throne, surrounded with many myriads of holy angels. Here he groaned, but there he triumphs; here he was crucified, but there he is crowned.

2. Behold how highly our nature is dignified and ennobled, in the person of our Redeemer. It is far exalted above that of the angels; and these glorious spirits bow the knee to him who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

3. This lets us see that the redemption of lost sinners, that was brought about by the death of Christ was very pleasing unto the Father. The great dignity and honour that is now conferred upon him, speaks a fragrant in his satisfaction to God, as well as a fulness of merit for the sons of men.

4. Then we should draw near to him in all the duties of worship, with the most awful reference and deepest prostration of soul, such as becomes the glory and dignity of his adorable Majesty. Let us have grace whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

5. Then let this exalted Saviour have your hands and your heart. Will ye deny him a lodging in your souls, to whom the Father has given to sit on his right hand? The



rejecting of Christ in his humble estate, was grievously punished on many individuals, and occasioned the destruction of the Jewish church and nation. And shall ye escape, if ye reject him now in his exalted and enthroned state? It is better that our hearts be his throne, where he may sway his sceptre in a way of mercy and grace, than that we be made his footstool in wrath.

6. Let this settle and compose the hearts of the Lords people, with respect to the state of religion, and the interests of Christ's kingdom among men. Christ is seated on his throne, and will see to his interest in the world. Zion's God and King reigneth, Isa. lii. 7. If Christ be on his throne, all his enemies shall be destroyed. As sure as he reigns King for ever, so sure shall Antichrist be degraded and humbled from off his throne, and all the rags he has left behind him in the Protestant churches be burnt.

IV. The last step of our Lord's exaltation, is his coming to judge the world at the last day. As I discoursed to you of this formerly\*, I shall be the briefer now. I shall endeavour a little to consider,

1. The manner and circumstances of Christ's coming to judge the world.

2. The Judge.

3. The parties to be judged.

4. The matters about which they are to be judged.

5. The properties of it.

6. The final causes of the judgment.

FIRST, I am to consider the manner and circumstances of Christ's coming to judge the world.

1. He shall come with observation, in the view of the whole assembled world: for all the kindreds of the earth shall on that day see this mighty Personage with their bodily eyes. None of all the sons and daughters of Adam can possibly avoid this wonderful sight. 'Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,' Rev. i. 7.

2. Though he shall come with observation, or in a visible manner, yet he will do so very suddenly and surprisingly.

\* This probably is the discourse on *The General Judgment* inserted in the *Fourfold State*, as no other Sermon on that subject is to be found among the author's MSS.

As the universal deluge caught the old world sleeping in the deepest security, so at the second coming of Christ the sinners of the last times will be drenched in slumbering stupidity, as is plain from Matth. xxiv. 37, 38, 39. In short, the coming of a thief to break a house, is not more surprising to those in it, than Christ's coming to judgment will be to sinners. Hence the apostle says, 1 Thess. v. 2. 'Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.'

3. He will come very seasonably, at the very precise point and period of time fixed upon in the eternal councils of heaven. When once that memorable moment begins, he will delay no longer, but instantly rend the heavens, and come down, 2 Pet. iii. 9, 10.

4. He will come very terribly. In that day the radiant rays of his majestic glory will break out with such an awful brightness, as will cause convulsions of the most formidable horror in the breasts of the ungodly. See Rev. vi. 14—17.

5. He will come gloriously: for 'then shall they see the Son of man coming with great power and glory,' Mark xiii. 26. To evince this, consider,

(1.) That this coming will be ushered in with that which our Lord himself calls 'the sign of the Son of man,' Matth. xxiv. 30. What this sign of the Son of man is, interpreters are not agreed. Some take it to be Christ himself, others the burning up of the world, others the sound of the last trumpet and the Papists the cross. But I think none of these can be the sign of the Lord Christ coming to judgment. I rather incline to follow the opinion of a judicious divine, who gathers what the sign of the Son of man is from Matth. xxiv. 27. 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;' that is, with infinite brightness and splendour will he come at that day. When he appears the second time without sin unto salvation, such rays of radiant brightness will set upon and shine from his body, as will darken all other lights, and awaken the drowsy world to look for his coming. Now, that such a brightness will encompass and shine from our Redeemer's body, we have no reason to doubt, seeing at his transfiguration upon the Mount 'his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was as white as the light,' Matth. xvii. 2. Now, all this beauty and brightness that appeared

on our Redeemer's body at his transfiguration, was but a type and figure of that refulgent splendour which will shine from it in that day when he will come to judge the world in righteousness. And this matchless and marvellous brightness we may presume to be that which he himself calls 'the sign of the Son of Man.'

(2.) When our Lord comes, the whole frame of nature will suffer the most fearful convulsions, and at last be rolled up in an universal flame, Psal. l. 3. Dan. vii. 9, 10. When once this mighty flame breaks out, it will burn with the keenest fury, and lay the earth, with all its works, in heaps of ruinous rubbish, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

3. At his coming he will be attended with a splendid retinue of ten thousand times ten thousand glorious angels. The flaming seraphims, those mighty ministers of his who fulfil all his pleasure, shall in a magnificent body form a majestic cavalcade, when the Prince of the kings of the earth comes to judgment, Matth. xvi. 27. 2 Thess. i. 7. Dan. vii. 10.

4. When he comes, he will sit upon a throne high and lifted up; and before him shall the general assembly of men and devils, be solemnly sisted, Matth. xxv. 31, 32. Rev. xx. 11, 12.

SECONDLY, I come now to speak of the Judge. And this is the Lord Jesus Christ. 'For, (says the apostle) we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,' 2 Cor. v. 10. Now, he is ordained Judge of the world.

1. Because this judgment is to be acted visibly. Men are to be judged, and the whole process with them will be for things done in the body. Now God is invisible in his nature, and therefore hath most wisely ordained the last judgment of the world to be transacted by a visible person. The Son of God will appear in his human nature, seated on a visible throne, that he may be seen and heard of all.

2. Because Christ is only qualified for this office. (1.) On account of the great dignity and excellency of his person, being God-man. No mere creature is capable of so high a trust, and such a glorious commission. To pass a sovereign sentence upon angels and men, is a royalty reserved for the Son of God alone, (2.) On account of the immense difficulty of this work. No mere creature is able to discharge it. If a select number of holy angels of the highest order were de-



puted for this purpose, they could not manage the judicial trial of one man. For, besides the innumerable acts and omissions in one life, the secret springs of the heart, from whence the guilt or goodness of moral actions is derived, are not open to them. It is he alone who discerns all things that can require an account of all.

3. He is constituted Judge of the world, as a reward of his death and bloody sufferings. So the apostle declares, Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10. His victorious sufferings are the titles to his triumphs. His being so ignominiously condemned by men, is the just reason of his advancement to this dignity and glory. This will for ever roll away the ignominy of his cross.

THIRDLY, Who are they that shall be judged? All must appear before Christ's tribunal. Men of all conditions in the church, apostles and private Christians, ministers and people, old and young, the good and the bad, believers and unbelievers, the just and the unjust, Jews and Gentiles, bond and free. Men of all conditions in the world must stand before Christ's bar, high and low, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, princes and peasants. No rank, degree, or quality, can exempt men from this appearance. All the distinctions which are among men here cease at the grave's mouth. All stand there on the same level, and are of the same mould. In a word, all the apostate angels and the universal progeny of Adam, shall appear before Christ at that day.

FOURTHLY, What are the things about which men shall be judged? We learn from 2 Cor. v. 10. that 'they are the things done in the body.' And they are these three, works, words, and thoughts.

1. All men's works will come into judgment, whether they be good or bad, Eccl. xii. 14. 'God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' All their good works will then be tried, as acts of piety towards God, and acts of righteousness and charity towards men, with respect to their principle, motives, and end. All men's evil works will be tried in judgment, both open and secret. Many dig deep now to hide their counsels from the Lord, and carry their wickedness under a vail of darkness, and care not what they do, provided they do it undiscerned. There are many abominations committed in men's lives, which the eyes of the world

cannot penetrate into; and there are innumerable evils lurking in their hearts, which no tongue can disclose. But at the last day all those things will be brought to light, such as midnight revels, secret murders, fraudulent dealings, and hidden hypocrisies.

2. All men's words shall be tried in judgment. God gave not the power and organ of speech to man, which is his glory and excellency above the beasts, to serve a sinful passion or corrupt humour, or to vent the froth and vanity of his own spirit, but to extol and magnify his Creator, and render him the praise of all his glorious and admirable works. Christians should employ their tongues for the honour of God, and the edification of one another. But O how wofully is this noble faculty abused by many, in cursing and swearing, lying, slandering, and detracting, and by belching forth obscene and scurrilous speeches! The lips of many drop nothing but gall and poison, to infect and corrupt others. Now, all this must come into judgment. Our Saviour tells us, that every idle word that a man speaks, he shall give account of it in the day of judgment.

3. All men's thoughts will be tried in judgment. For Christ will 'make manifest the counsels of the heart,' 1 Cor. iv. 5. Many think now that thoughts go free; but it is not so in God's account. He knows all men's thoughts, and records them in the book of his remembrance, and at the last day they will be manifested and revealed. O what an infinite variety of thoughts is in every man's mind? This thinking faculty is never idle, but is always putting forth whole shoals of thoughts. Men have many atheistical and blasphemous thoughts, many murdering and revengeful thoughts, covetous and ambitious thoughts, unchaste and impure thoughts, vain, empty and unprofitable thoughts, and many bold presumptuous thoughts. Now, all these must come into judgment.

FIFTHLY, What are the properties of this judgment?

1. It will be an universal judgment. Those that lived under the law, and those that lived under the gospel, and those that having no law were a law unto themselves, Rom. ii. 12. those that had many talents, and they that had but one, must all appear at Christ's bar. Those that were carried from the cradle to the grave, and those that stooped for age, the father and the child, the master and the servant, in a word, the

whole offspring of Adam, will be judged at that day. The bowels of the earth, the bottom of the sea, and all the elements, shall give up their dead; and all the apostate angels shall then appear and receive their final doom.

2. It will be an awful judgment. It is called in scripture 'the judgment of the great day.' The immediate antecedents of Christ's appearing will make it very terrible. There will be a dreadful catastrophe of the world, which will fill men's hearts with horror and fear; the bands and ligaments of nature will then be broken asunder, and her present frame and constitution dissolved; the elements shall be reduced into their primitive confusion: the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, Matth. xxiv. 29. There will be a strange convulsion of nature at the coming of the Lord. All the stately palaces and magnificent buildings which men doat so much upon now, will then be reduced to ashes. Again, the manner of his coming will be awful and solemn: 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord,' 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. This will be such a shout as armies were wont to make when the signal of battle was given; and after this shout the trump of God shall sound. By this tremendous blast sinners shall be affrighted out of their graves; but to the saints it will carry no more terror than the roaring of cannons, when armies of friends approach a besieged city for the relief of those that are within it. And the dead being raised, they shall be gathered together before the great and awful throne on which Christ shall sit in his glory, and there they shall be exactly divided by the angels into two companies, one on the Judge's right-hand, and the other on his left. Here will be the greatest assembly that ever met; where Adam may see his numerous offspring, even as the sand upon the sea-shore, which no man can number.

3. This judgment will be exact and critical. It is the Searcher of the heart, to whom all secrets are known, that will pass this final sentence upon men. His eyes are as a



flame of fire, and can penetrate into the centre of the soul. All sins, whether secret or open, shall be accounted for at that day; and the sins of men's thoughts and affections, which Satan could not accuse them of, shall then be brought into judgment. For in that day 'God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ,' Rom. ii. 16. All men's sins of omission, and their woful neglect of improving the means, advantages, and opportunities for doing or receiving good, shall be accounted for at that day. All acts of commission in youth and age, whether gross sensuality, as licentiousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, and all excess of riot, shall be accounted for to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead, 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5. And all acts of unrighteousness to men, yea, and sins of lesser guilt, for which the most part of men are not touched either with grief or shame while here, shall then be produced in judgment. And all the sins of men's words, which are so easily committed, but not so easily observed, shall be called to a heavy remembrance. This will be a day that will perfectly fan the world. Justice will then hold the balance in an even hand; Christ will go to work so exactly, that some divines have thought, that the day of judgment will last as long as the day of the gospel's administration hath done or shall do.

4. It will be a righteous judgment; 'He will judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31. His knowledge of all men's characters and actions is infallibly true, and therefore his sentence upon them will be incontestibly just, consistent with all the rules of the highest equity and justice. And the sentence he shall pass upon both saints and sinners, shall be universally applauded at that day.

5. *Lastly*, It is a final judgment, from which there can lie no appeal.' Here in the world, if men judge themselves lesed in one court, they can appeal to another. But it is not so here: for this is the supreme tribunal, where the great Sovereign of heaven and earth will give judgment upon angels and men: and the sentence once passed, will immediately be put in execution, Matth. xxv. 46. Just after the sentence is pronounced by Christ, it is immediately added, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.' The sentence shall be irrevocable, and can never be repealed. It will determine the eternal

state of all, and transmit them either to everlasting happiness or misery.

SIXTHLY, What are the final causes or ends of this judgment?

1. The glory of the justice and mercy of God; the former in punishing the wicked, and the latter in rewarding his friends. Many eminent displays of these attributes have been exhibited in the world, but the largest and fullest manifestation of them will be given at the last day, when the righteous judge 'shall take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,' 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. And then he shall say unto the righteous, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Matth. xxv. 34.

2. The glory of the Lord Jesus, which will be highly manifested at that day. His first coming was obscure and without observation. For he came in the form of a servant, and was reproached and reviled by men. But then he will come in power and great glory, as the Lord and Heir of all things. At his first coming he veiled his divinity with the infirmities of flesh. But then the rays of his incomprehensible glory shall dazzle the eyes of all that behold him.—When he came first to the world, he stood before the tribunals of men, and was condemned to the cursed death of the cross; but then he will sit upon a glorious throne, and all the princes and potentates in the world shall stand trembling before him, expecting a sentence from his mouth, upon which their eternal destiny will depend. He is now seated at the right-hand of the Majesty on high; but the curtains of the heavens conceal his glory from us; and therefore there is a time fixed, when in the sight of the whole world he will manifest his glory.

3. The rewarding of men according to their works, and thereby vindicating the providence of God from the imputation of unrighteousness in his governing of the world.—Things seem to be carried with an unequal balance in the present life. The wicked prosper, as if they were rewarded for being evil; and the godly suffer, as if they were punished for being good. Yea, the virtuous and the vicious are equally

miserable here. In common calamities, there is no difference between the righteous and the wicked. There is no peculiar antidote to secure them from pestilential infection ; there is no strong retreat to defend thee from the sword of a conquering enemy : they have no secret provisions in time of famine ; for the wheat and the tares are bound in a bundle, and cast into the same fire : yea, oftimes the godly are in the worst condition, and merely on account of their goodness. They are daily oppressed, because they do not make resistance ; and loaded with sufferings, because they endure them with patience. They are for God's sake made the spectacles of extreme misery, while the insolent defyers of his majesty and laws enjoy all manner of visible felicity. And therefore, for the vindication of his justice, there must be a day of retribution, wherein God will reward every man according to his works. Divine justice requires that there should be a different procedure with those that differ among themselves ; that it should be well with them that do well, and ill with them that do evil ; and that every man should reap according to what he hath sown.

USE 1. Labour to get a firm belief and persuasion of this great and awful truth. Alas ! the most part of men are so busied about the affairs of this present life, that they do not mind the future. These awful words, *death, judgment, and eternity*, make no more impression upon their hearts, than if they were words of no signification. This is a truth of the greatest importance, and therefore is clearly and plentifully revealed in the holy scripture. Harken then to the voice of this heavenly oracle, and believe and tremble at the thoughts of this awful day.

2. Think frequently on this terrible judgment, that the belief of it may be powerful on your hearts and lives. One great cause of men's woful neglect of duty is the want of serious thoughts concerning Christ's second coming. This renders them lazy and secure, so that they make no provision for it : but where it is firmly believed, and duly thought upon, O how active and diligent does it make them ! It had this effect on Paul, 2 Cor. v. 9, 10, 11. Many put this day far away, and set it at a remote distance from them ; and this makes them stupid and secure. I have read of a minister, who in a sermon described the last judgment in all its terrors, with such ardent expressions, and those animated with such



an affecting voice, and such an inflamed countenance and action, that his hearers broke forth into passionate cries, as if the Judge himself had been present to pass the final sentence upon them. In the height of their commotion, the preacher bade them stop their tears and passions, for he had one thing more to add, the most affecting and astonishing consideration of all the rest, namely, that, within less than a quarter of an hour, the memory and regard of that which so transported them would vanish, and their affections return to their carnal objects in their usual manner. The neglect of serious consideration makes even the doctrine of eternal judgment to become without efficacy. It is needful, therefore, that the belief of this truth be so firmly seated in the heart, that it may engage the attention of the thoughts, and may have a royal power over the will and affections, that so our lives may be ordered according to its rules. Serious thoughts of this awful day would prove the most effectual restraint from sin; and particularly it would have a notable efficacy in keeping them back from secret sins, and deprive the devil of one of his greatest advantages against men, arising from solitude and secrecy. It would be a powerful remedy against sensual temptations, which so easily ensnare the hearts of men; and would change the apprehensions of the mind, alter the taste of the appetite, and make the most enticing and irresistible lusts the objects of our greatest detestation.

3. We should fear and tremble at the thoughts of this awful day. The great ones in the world that are most powerful and unruly, may hence see that there is a power above them. Many oppose Christ and his interest now, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,' Psal. ii. 3. But they should remember that 'he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision,' verse 4. The day is hastening on, when 'he shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure,' ver. 5. He 'will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel,' ver. 9. The day is coming, when he shall appear in his power and great glory, and all the opposers of his cause and interest shall be sisted before his throne, and hear this dreadful sentence pronounced against them: 'Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me,' Luke xix. 27.

4. Then this should make the saints patient under all their trials and sufferings. They have no reason to be ashamed of suffering disgrace for Christ ; for he will abundantly reward them at the great day. Whatever injustice they have got from men, they will have righteous judgment from God. This should make them despise the reproaches and censures of their most malicious adversaries. There is a day appointed, wherein oppressed innocence shall obtain the noblest victory, and disgraced godliness the most public and highest honour. They may suffer under the tyranny of time, but they shall reign in the kingdom of eternity. The belief of this is enough to make them glory in the sharpest tribulations, and joyfully triumph over Satan with his perverted malignant world, Heb. xi. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

5. *Lastly*, Make the Judge your friend in time, by receiving and embracing him as your only Saviour, offered to you as such in the gospel ; and give all diligence that ye may be found in him, clothed with his righteousness, in that terrible day. There will be no standing before his awful tribunal, unless you be clothed in the garments of your elder brother ; and there will be no access into the guest-chamber, unless ye have on the wedding-garment of imputed righteousness. Therefore kiss the Son, and be reconciled to him, and so shall ye appear before him as your Judge at the last day. Acquaint now yourselves with him, and be at peace ; for thereby good shall come unto you, particularly that of a solemn acquittal in the last judgment. But if ye will not now submit unto the sceptre of his grace and righteousness, and subject yourselves to him as your only rightful Lord and Sovereign, willing to have him to reign over you, and to be ruled by his laws, ye shall not be able to stand in judgment, but be condemned with his enemies, and have your eternal habitation in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, be persuaded to flee from the wrath to come, and so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

## OF THE APPLICATION OF REDEMPTION.

TITUS iii. 5.—*He saved us,—by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

**H**AVING taken a view of our glorious Redeemer, in his person, incarnation, offices, and his twofold state of humiliation and exaltation, let us now proceed to consider the application of that redemption which he purchased for us by his obedience and death.

If we cast our eyes backward to the preceding words, we find, (1.) Our wretched natural state, ver. 3. ‘For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.’ This is a dreadful picture of the depravity and misery of human nature; in which not only Pagans, who lived without God in the world, but Jews, the peculiar people of God, of which nation was Paul, were deeply involved. (2.) Redemption purchased for us by Jesus Christ, which is the way in which the love of God to man appeared. And this redemption is as extensive as the wretched condition of man. As all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, are by nature in a state of wretchedness, so redemption was purchased by Christ for both, and both are warranted to come to Christ for it; though none but the elect among both will obtain it. And in the text we have the application of that redemption, *He saved us*, &c. In which we have,

1. Sinful creatures made partakers of Christ’s redemption. *He saved us.* He speaks of himself and other saints yet in the world, whom he says God has saved, saved by virtue of Christ’s death, from sin and wrath, put them into a state of, and given them a right to, eternal complete salvation.

2. How they are made partakers of this redemption.—Where we may observe, (1.) The impulsive cause: ‘not according to our *good* works,’ these were not the moving causes of our salvation; but ‘his own mercy:’ the same mercy that moved him to send our Redeemer, moved him to apply the redemption purchased by him. (2.) The way and manner of accomplishing it: *By the renewing of the Holy Ghost.* The Holy Spirit makes the application of that re-



demption, regenerating us, whereof baptism is the sign, and so renewing and making us new creatures. Thus, Christ made the salve for our sore, by his obedience and death, and the spirit applies it. Hence we have a proper answer to that

*Quest.* 'How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?'

*Doct. Ans.* 'We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his holy Spirit.'

In handling this subject, I shall,

I. Consider the purchase of this redemption.

II. The application of it.

III. Apply the subject in some practical uses.

I. As to the purchase of redemption or salvation spoken of in the text, five things are to be considered.

1. What the redemption is. 1. It is a deliverance by payment of a price, 1 Pet. i. 18. 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,' &c. Sinners were the lawful captives of justice, Isa. xlix. 24. 'Shall the lawful captive be delivered?' And without shedding of blood there is no remission. This redemption consists of two parts. (1.) Deliverance from evil. (2.) Restoration to the good lost. (1.) Deliverance from sin, the chief evil, Matth. i. 21. 'He shall save his people from their sins.' This is the house of bondage which our Redeemer finds all his people in, where they are in chains held fast to their drudgery. He came to deliver them and set them free from this slavery, Rom. vi. 6, 7. 'Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead, is freed from sin.' (2.) Deliverance from wrath, 1 Thess. i. ult.—'Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.' The wages of sin being death, even eternal destruction of the sinner in hell, all mankind were liable unto it: but now a ransom is paid, whereby there is purchased to sinners freedom from wrath, the taking off the sentence of death lying on them, whereby they were bound over to everlasting misery.

2. Redemption includes in it a restoration to the good lost or a possession of all that happiness and all those blessings which men forfeited by the primitive transgression, which

may all be summed up in eternal life, begun in every believer in this world, and perfected in the world of glory.

3. Who purchased this Redemption. Even Jesus Christ, the Son of God in our nature, 1 Thess. i. ult. forecited. He took on him our nature, and became our near kinsman, that he might redeem the slaves and the captives, and redeem to them their mortgaged inheritance. For he made a full redemption, not only buying sinners from under the curse, but withal purchasing for them the blessing they had forfeited. This was a work too great for any lower person: rivers of oil would not have done it; the stock of angels could not have answered this strait of mankind. But God 'laid help upon one that is mighty,' Psal. lxxxix. 19.

4. What was the ransom paid. All that Christ did and suffered for sinners comes under the name of the *ransom*. For he himself was the ransom, 1 Tim. ii. 6. 'Who gave himself a ransom for all.' He did not give gold, money, or lands, for us; for such mean things could not have been accepted: but he gave himself for us: Who gave himself for me,' says Paul, Gal. ii. 20. He gave body for body, soul for soul, bare our sins in his own body, and made his soul an offering for sin. And as our ransom,

(1.) He obeyed, gave punctual perfect obedience unto all the commands of the law, and so fulfilled all righteousness. Whereas we were born sinners, he was born holy; whereas we lived sinners, keeping none of the commands, he lived sinless, and kept them all. So that the law had all its demands of obedience from him.

(2.) He suffered and bare what the law threatened; and so satisfied justice in the room of sinners. Both these we have, Gal. iv. 4, 5. 'When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,' Phil. ii. 8. 'Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' Hence, when the scripture attributes our redemption to his blood, Eph. i. 7. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. it is not to be understood exclusively of his obedience and other sufferings, but of his bloody death, which was the completing of the ransom; John xix. 30. Jesus cried, 'It is finished:' and therefore his blood is named, as supposing the other parts of his obedience and sufferings;

as if one should say, that a man is delivered from prison, by one's paying the utmost farthing for him.

5. For whom this redemption was purchased. The ransom paid was sufficient for the redemption of all mankind; but the elect only were actually redeemed; it was designed for them only, John x. 15. 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' Chap. xvii. 9. 'I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.' It is certain that many perish, and that satisfaction is exacted of themselves for their own debt; so that if Christ died for them, he so far died in vain, Gal. ii. 21. as I have formerly shewn at large.

II. As to the application of this redemption, consider,

1. What this application is. It is the actual interesting us in it, investing us in the possession of it, and making it effectual to us for the ends for which it was purchased; and therefore the text calls it a *saving us*. So the immediate consequent of this application is twofold.

1st. Deliverance from sin and the wrath of God, Rom. vi. 18. 'Being made free from sin.' Chap. viii. 1. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.' The chains of guilt binding over the sinner to God's wrath are broken off; the cords are loosed, and thrown away from the prisoner; he is freed from the slavery and reigning power of lusts, and so brought out of Satan's prison.

2dly, Restoration to peace with, and the favour of God, and to a right and title to heaven, and, in a word, being entitled to all the benefits of Christ's purchase, and actual enjoying them in our own persons. This is the effectual application of it to us, even as a salve applied heals the sore.

2. The necessity of this application. It is so necessary that none can have saving benefit by it until it be applied, John i. 12. In contemplation of the purchased redemption, the lives of the elect are spared, and they have means of grace given them, till they be brought in to Christ. But still in the mean time they are in a state of wrath, their sins are unpardoned, and they are without actual right to the inheritance of the saints. As a remedy cannot recover a man unless it be applied; so men must die eternally, notwithstanding of the death of Christ, unless his redemption be applied to them in particular, for their recovery.

3. Who applies this redemption. It is the office of the



Holy Spirit to apply it. The Father sent our Redeemer; the Son purchased our redemption; and the Holy Spirit applies it, as says the text. Our Lord Jesus is the royal Bridegroom; who offers himself and all his benefits unto sinners, upon their marriage with him; it is the Holy Spirit that gains the sinner's consent, and so brings the soul to Christ, whereby it has interest in his purchase. Now,

1st. The outward means the Spirit makes use of for this end is the ministry of the word, 1 Cor. iii. 5. This is suited to the nature of rational creatures, wherein their sin, danger, and need of Christ, his ability and willingness to save, are laid before them, and they are invited and persuaded to accept of the Redeemer, who thereby comes to their prison doors, offering them liberty; and to their bedsides, offering healing. And faith comes by hearing.

2dly, There is a powerful operation of the Spirit on all the faculties of the soul that accompanies it, 1 Thess. i. 5, 6. 'Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.' Hereby the prison-doors are made to fly open, and the fetters to fly off, like Sampson's green withs from the devil's captive. A new light is let into the mind, the soul is made willing to be made the Lord's only, wholly, and for ever, Psal. cx. 3. Phil. ii. 13. The conscience is quickened, the affections are spiritualized, and the whole soul is affected, so as with heart and good will to embrace Christ. And this is the proper work of the Lord's Spirit. Who else can do it? who can take of Christ's and give to poor sinners, but the Spirit of Christ? John xvi. 26.

4. Whom does he apply it to. He applies it to those, and those only, for whom it was purchased; that is, to the elect, Acts xiii. 48. 'As many as were ordained unto eternal life, believed.' The Holy Spirit knows the deep things of God, was privy to the counsel of peace that passed betwixt the Father and the Son from eternity: the book of life is open to him, and agreeable thereto he manages his application. Such as fall away may have slight touches of the enlightening Spirit, but they never had the spirit of sanctification resting on them for this application.

The bargain betwixt Christ and an elect soul may get many backsets; sometimes it may seem to be going fair on, and sometimes to be broken off, without hope of ever coming to again: but he will never let it blow up for altogether, but will pursue it till it be an effectual match. We may say of the Spirit in this case as Naomi did to Ruth, 'The man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing,' Ruth iii. ult.

5. *Lastly*, Whether this application be completed at once or not. It is certain, that a whole Christ, with all his benefits, is at once made over to the sinner. But as certain it is, that there are many of these benefits which they are not presently put in possession of. And therefore the complete application comes not until the last day, which therefore is called our redemption-day, Eph. iv. 30. Rom. viii. 23. Hence the Spirit is still at work in believers carrying on this work, and will never leave it, till he have perfectly united them with him, and taken away every thing that occasions distance.

#### APPLICATION.

USE. I. Of information. This lets us see,

1. We are poor miserable creatures without Christ, Rev. iii. 17. That we need to be saved, speaks us to be lost; that we need to be redeemed, speaks us to be in bondage. O, sinner! know, that while thou art out of Christ, thou art not a free man. Nay, (1.) Thou art a prisoner of justice; for thou hast broken the law, and thou art taken and bound as in a prison and canst not escape, Isa. lxi. 1. (2.) Thou art Satan's captive, ib. Satan made war against heaven, and engaging with innocent Adam, took him captive, and all of us in his loins; and behold thou art born and livest in captivity. (3.) Thou art the slave of sin, 2 Pet. ii. 19. Thou canst do nothing but sin, and go the round from one sin to another; for that is the only work which Satan's captives get leave to work, Rom. vi. 20.

2. See the need ye have of the application of Christ's redemption. Ye need to have an interest in Christ, to have Christ applied to your souls, as much as ever a poor captive needs the applying of a ransom, or the sick man of a remedy; without which the former must die in the pit, and the latter of his disease, without remedy. The ransom may be paid,

and the remedy provided ; but if they be not applied, it is all one to the captive and sick, as if there had been no ransom nor remedy.

3. See the happiness of the saints who are converted by the Spirit. Christ and all his purchase is theirs, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. We may say of them as of the prodigal, they were lost, but now found ; dead, but now alive ; prisoners, but now at liberty, &c. Their guilt is now removed, the power of sin in them is broken, and the indwelling power thereof shall be taken away. Heaven is theirs, the mortgaged inheritance is bought back, and they are infest in it.

4. The Holy Spirit is a divine person, not a divine attribute ; for it is his office to apply Christ's redemption to sinners, which cannot agree but to a person. He is the third person in the Godhead, to whom we owe the same faith, worship, and obedience, as to the Father and the Son. And therefore it is a more justifiable way of speaking of the Spirit to speak of the Spirit as a person, *he*, than as of a thing, *it*.

5. There is an absolute need of the Spirit's powerful working on our souls, in order to salvation. Redemption is purchased by Christ ; but unless the Spirit apply it to us, we cannot have saving benefit by it. We cannot move towards the Lord in conversion, but as we are moved ; for we are dead, and ' It is the spirit that quickeneth,' John vi. 63. We are in darkness, it is the Spirit that enlightens. We are wayward, and will not turn, we must be made willing in a day of power. Therefore we have much need to seek the Spirit.

6. How just is the destruction of those that resist the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to apply Christ ? If men will not have a remedy applied, they must die of their disease. If a captive will not have the ransom applied to him, he must die in the pit, since he refuses to be loosed. They that fight against the Spirit in stifling their convictions, sinning over the belly of light, their damnation is most just. They run a most dangerous risk.

7. What a glorious and great work is the work of man's salvation ! At the making of man there was, as it were, a consultation of the Trinity, but the work was soon done, Gen. i. 26, 27. ' Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.—So God created man in his own image.' But at



the recovery of man, all hands were set to work (so to speak) The Father acts his part in chusing a certain number of the lost race to be partakers of his glory, giving them unto his Son for a people, and him to them for a Redeemer. The Son takes on their nature, and redeems them with his blood, and purchases eternal salvation for them. The Holy spirit applies that purchase unto them, renewing their natures, quickening them, and knitting them to Christ as the Head of vital influences. O! should we not admire this great and glorious work?

8. Let the Lord himself have the glory of the conversion of souls. If it be by the Spirit that redemption is applied, then it is the Spirit himself, and not man, that makes himself to differ from others. It is not that one uses his free-will better than another, but that the free Spirit looses the bands from off the will in one, and not in another.

9. *Lastly*, We may hence learn the nature of the sin unto death; which, because it does in a special manner run cross to the operation of the Spirit, tending to the application of Christ's redemption to a sinner, is called 'the sin against the Holy Ghost;' and may be thus described:

It is a rejecting, opposing, and blaspheming, of Christ and the way of salvation through him, after a man hath been clearly convinced of the truth, and tasted the goodness thereof, by the inward operation of the Holy Ghost, and that deliberately, and wilfully, and avowedly, out of malice and despite against Christ and his Holy Spirit. Here observe,

1. The object which this sin is conversant about. It strikes against the main part of the gospel, namely, Christ and the way of salvation by him. Hence they are said to 'crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,' Heb. vi. 6. Therefore, while one does not fly in the face of the way of salvation through Christ crucified, he cannot be thus guilty, though his sin be otherwise ever so heinous.

2. The actings of this forlorn sinner.

(1.) He rejects Christ, and the way of salvation through him. He will not be saved that way; he will rather run the risk of damnation than be obliged to Christ, or take him for his Saviour. Though he should die of his disease, he will not have Christ's redemption applied to him. If he has not professed that way in time past, he downright refuses it for the

time to come, Matth. xii. 24. Said the Pharisees to Christ, 'This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils; intimating they would have no more to do with him then, but stand off from him, as one would from the prime agent of the prince of the devils. Or if they have professed that way, they renounce it, they, 'fall away,' Heb. vi. 6. not partially, but totally, quite given up with that way of salvation. Hence no person that does not quite renounce and refuse to be saved by Christ, can be guilty of this sin.

(2.) He does not only reject it for himself, but opposes it for others, using all his endeavours to root out the gospel from the earth by word and deed, pleading against that way, and persecuting it, as he has opportunity. As did the Pharisees, and those mentioned Heb. vi. 6. They 'crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.' They would do it to him personally, and actually do it to him in his members. And so those who are not arrived at this height, cannot be guilty of this sin.

(3.) He not only rejects and opposes it, but blasphemes it, reproaches and rails against Christ, and the way of salvation through him. Hence it is called 'blasphemy,' Matth. xii. 31. and 'speaking against the Holy Ghost,' ver. 32. So that neither are they guilty of this sin, that do not reproach and rail against the way of religion.

Now, this is horrible guilt; yet I must tell you, that a man may do all this, reject, oppose, and blaspheme Christ, and the way of salvation through him, and yet not be guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, though indeed they are fearful advances in the way to it. For Paul did all this before his conversion, yet 'obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly in unbelief.' See Matth. xii. 31. 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.' Therefore observe,

3. The qualifications of the party to whom this sin is incident. He is one that has been clearly convinced of the truth of the gospel, and has had a taste of the goodness of it by the inward operation of the Spirit. He plainly fights in this against his own conscience, and the witness of the Holy Spirit manifested unto him. Hence it is called 'speaking against the Holy Ghost,' Matth. xii. 32. not so much against his person, as against and over the belly of his enlightening

operation, not in others, but in himself. This our Lord, who knows men's hearts, discovered concerning those Pharisees mentioned Matth. xii. And Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. is plain to this purpose.

Hence those who remain under common ignorance of the truths of the gospel, and have never had an enlightening work on them, wherein, by the inward operation of the Spirit on their souls, the gospel-way of salvation has been particularly manifested to them, both in the truth and goodness thereof; those, I say, are not capable of this sin.

But for a man thus qualified to reject and blaspheme Christ, is horrible; and yet even this will not conclude a person under the guilt of this sin. For some of the saints were by Paul, when a persecutor, 'compelled to blaspheme,' no doubt against the clear light within their breasts, Acts xxvi. 10, 11. Yet there sins were pardoned, as all the sins of the saints are. And hence we may conclude, that the blasphemies which poor souls are driven into by the horrible injections of, tossings and harrassings they have from the devil, in his hour and power of darkness, cannot be the sin against the Holy Ghost, nor unpardonable. Therefore we must take in,

4. *Lastly*, The properties of these actings of this forlorn sinner. All this is done, Christ and the way of salvation are rejected, opposed, and blasphemed, by this sinner.

(1.) Deliberately and wilfully, Heb. x. 26. 'If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.' It is done out of choice, not unadvisedly, rashly, and in the hurry of a temptation, from fear or constraint. Therefore no sin of indeliberation, or weakness, or that one is hurried into against his will in any measure, or ere he is aware, can be this unpardonable sin, however heinous otherwise it may be. For so Peter denied Christ, and these saints aforesaid blasphemed.

(2.) Avowedly. This forlorn sinner comes to the light with his sin; he does not commit it secretly within his own breast, but openly in the view of the world. It is an overt speech, act, or deed; as is manifest from Matth. xii. 24. 'They said, this fellow casteth not out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils;' ver. 32. 'Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him.'



Heb. vi. 6. 'They put him to open shame.' Hence it is manifest, that no thought, how horrible soever, that passeth through the heart, which one is ashamed of, and sorrow for, and cannot avow, can be this sin; for that cannot be a 'putting Christ to open shame.' And,

(3.) Maliciously. He does not this out of base fear, love to the world, or some such like motive; but out of pure malice against Christ his Spirit, and the way of salvation; Heb. vi. 6. They 'crucify him, and put him to an open shame.' And x. 29. 'Who hath trodden under foot the Son of God,—and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.' He is one that is downright obstinate against the Lord, maliciously rejects the way of salvation, refuses contemptuously any benefit by Christ's blood, despitefully sets himself against the Spirit in his operations for application of Christ's redemption to him. In one word, he behaves like a desperate wounded man, who tears away the plaister from his wound, and throws it at the face of the surgeon who applied it, chusing rather to bleed to death, than be saved from death by him that made it, or applied it. This is the unpardonable sin, and the unpardonable sinner, whose case is absolutely hopeless.

Hence whatever your sin be, yet if you be grieved for it, and would be content to have mercy through Christ, or desire the application of his redemption, you are not guilty of this sin.

And thus you may see how this sin becomes unpardonable, and how it is impossible to renew such again unto repentance; namely, that as the case of the sick man is desperate, who rejects the remedy, and sets himself maliciously against the physician; so that soul's case must be utterly hopeless, which maliciously, wilfully and avowedly, rejects, opposes, and blasphemes Christ the only sacrifice, and the Holy Ghost the only Sanctifier. For if one will by no means have Christ, he must needs perish, for there is no other sacrifice if they despitefully refuse his Spirit, there is no other Sanctifier. How then can they be pardoned, or brought to repentance? If one sin against the Father, as a Law-giver, the satisfaction of the Son can take away that sin; if one sin against the Son, by unbelief or otherwise, the Holy Spirit can by his grace cure him of that; but if one will needs do despite to the Spirit of grace, and maliciously set

himself against his application of Christ's redemption, there is no more hope; since there is not another person in the Godhead to cure this.

USE II. Of trial. Ye may try by this, whether ye be partakers of Christ's redemption or not, namely, if the Spirit has effectually applied it unto you. For there is no other way of partaking of it; and this never misgives. I shall give you the following marks of the Spirit's application.

*Mark 1.* Where the Spirit applies Christ's redemption, the wound is fully opened, and then Christ's redemption is fully applied, Luke vi. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Where the work is not carried through by the Spirit, either the soul's wound is so laid open that the sinner despairs, and there is no application of Christ, as in the case of Judas; or else it is not enough opened and laid out, sins of the heart, and particularly the sin of one's nature, are not so discovered, as to convince the soul of its utter impotency to good. Hence Christ is not applied for sanctification, as well as for justification, and so not truly applied at all. But where the wound is laid open sufficiently, both in point of guilt, which the soul sees it can by no means remove, and in point of utter natural corruption, which the soul sees it cannot help; and withal the soul is brought to Christ both for righteousness and sanctification, to close with him, and depend on him for both; there the Spirit has applied Christ's redemption (1 Cor. i. 30.), laying the plaister to in the full breadth of the sore.

*Mark 2.* Where there is a begun delivery from the power of sin, the reign of it is broken, it has not the soul at its beck as before, Rom. vi. 14. It is true sin may prevail, because the power of it is not entirely broken, the application not being yet perfect. But the heart is habitually loosed from sin, longing to be rid of it, and endeavouring to be freed of the bonds, as the captive casting off his chains when he is coming forth of the prison, and Lazarus raised leaving his dead-clothes, Rom. vii. 24.

USE III. Of exhortation, in two branches.

*First,* Be deeply concerned for the application of Christ's redemption unto yourselves. Seek it, and be not satisfied without it. Make it your greatest care to be partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ. To press this, I offer the following motives.

*Mot. 1.* Consider what a great redemption it is, Heb ii. 3.

It is a redemption from the greatest evils, sin, and the wrath of God ;—of the greatest benefits, peace with God, pardon, and eternal life ;—performed by the greatest of persons, the Son of God ; and could be performed by no lesser one, being above the reach of angels and men ;—purchased by the paying of the greatest ransom, the blood of God.

*Mot. 2.* Some are made partakers of it. So says the text. The door of the treasure-house is opened to some, and they are brought in, and do partake of it. There have been before you, who have been dying of their wounds, as ye are now, and by the application of it they have been recovered, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Up then, and put in for a share in this glorious redemption.

*Mot. 3.* Ye need it as well as others, Eph. ii. 3. Are not ye as well as others naturally justice's prisoners, Satan's captives, and sin's slaves ? Ye cannot deliver yourselves more than others could ; ye must perish in the pit, if ye be not partakers of this redemption. And ye are not able to bear the weight of wrath more than others. O let not your need prompt you on to it !

*Mot. 4.* It is in your offer this day. Our Lord is crying to you by the gospel, ' Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope ; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee,' Zech. ix. 12. The physician is come to your bed-sides, offering you his never-failing medicines. All the benefits of Christ's purchase are offered to you. They cost him dear, but he offers them freely, though the price of blood to him : Isa. lv. 1 ' Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.'

*Mot. 5.* You will have no saving benefit by it, if it be not applied to you, John viii. 24. What will it avail you, that Christ died for the sins of his people, if ye have no interest in his death ? ye must die for your own sins, and bear your own burden for evermore. There is a physician indeed ; but what will ye be the better, if ye do not employ him ? What though he get his directions in the gospel ? If ye do not make use of the remedy, ye will die of your disease.

*Mot. 6.* Nay, it will be worse for you than if there had been no redemption purchased, Heb. ii. 3. ' How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation ?' Matth. xi. 24. ' It shall be



more tolerable for the land of Sodom (says Christ to Capernaum) in the day of judgment, than for thee.' It will aggravate your condemnation, that there was a ransom paid, and it was in your power, but ye slighted it. O how fearful is the slight given to the price of blood, the blood of the Son of God! The Mediator's vengeance will pursue such. And it will gnaw the consciences of such as a thousand worms at last, that they slighted the same.

*Mot. 7. Lastly,* It will not always be in your offer, Luke xiv. 24, 25. Behold, now is the day of salvation. The time comes when the market of free grace will be over, and if one would ever so fain have it, they shall not get it. Therefore delay not. Ye know not but it may be out of your reach to-morrow; for ye have no reason to boast of to-morrow, as ye know not what a day may bring forth.

*2dly,* As ever ye would have the redemption purchased by Christ applied to you, and would not mar that application.

1. Beware of that treatment of the Spirit, which has a tendency thereto, yea, and leads the way to the great transgression. And beware of,

*1st.* Resisting the Spirit, Acts vii. 51. but rather fall in with him in his operations. To stave off convictions, and guard against awakenings out of a state of sin, to sin over the belly of light, and inward checks, and to go on obstinately in sin, in opposition to calls to repentance, is to resist the Spirit. And that is most dangerous, as dangerous as for the sick man to resist the physician that would apply healing plaisters to his sores, and so fight against his own welfare.

*2dly,* Quenching the Spirit, 1 Thess. v. 19. Sometimes this holy fire begins to burn, and ye may find the heat of it: O then take heed, as one who is upon the point of cure, that ye do not mar it! Do not cast water on this fire to drown it out, by sinning against light, putting out your convictions out of your hearts and heads, by sinning with a strong hand, or filling up your thoughts with worldly business, drowning them by sinful pleasures, &c. Withdraw not fuel from this fire, by neglecting the motions and operations of the Spirit. Do not smother it, by not giving them vent in prayer, and supplication, and confession before God, or in consulting with his servants in cases wherein ye need particular direction. O, why will ye ruin yourselves, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life?

*3dly*, Greiving the Spirit, Eph. iv. 30. Even believers themselves have need of the Spirit for carrying on this work of application of Christ's redemption. And they are in hazard of retarding and interrupting it, by their grieving the Spirit by gross sins, which in a special manner defile the conscience, or by sins, though smaller in their nature, yet attended with great aggravations, or by not valuing and esteeming the Spirit's graces, comforts, influences, and ordinances. These things provoke the Spirit to withdraw; and so the work lies behind, the application of the redemption is not advanced.

*4thly*, Vexing the Spirit, Isa. lxiii. 10. It is true, the Spirit of the Lord is not subject to passions; for these are inconsistent with the infinite happiness of God; and so he cannot properly be grieved or vexed, nor disturbed. But men are said to vex the Spirit, when they treat him so as would vex one capable of vexation. This is done by often falling into the same sins, Numb. xiv. 22. especially falling into them again after a person has been convinced of the evil of them, confessed, mourned for them, and resolved against them; and much more when, besides all this, they have smarted for them. This is the great trial of divine patience, a tempting of God, and puts men in great hazard of being given up of God, Numb. xiv. 27.

*Lastly*, Blaspheming the Spirit in his operations. This is done by mocking at religion, or the work of the Spirit of the Lord, in others: A dangerous business, as these young blasphemers felt, 2 Kings ii. 23, 24. 'And Elisha went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald-head, Go up, thou bald-head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord: and there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.' Or by fathering the operations of the Spirit in ourselves or others, on some other cause, as when religion is counted folly, soul-exercise melancholy or distraction, and communion with God delusion. Thus the Spirit, as the Spirit of regeneration and of prayer, is often blasphemed.

2. As ever ye would have the redemption purchased by Christ applied to you, labour to get the Spirit; make it

your business to get him to dwell in you, and work in you. Lay out yourselves to be his habitation. Consider,

*Mot. 1.* Ye are by nature without the Spirit, Jude 19. therefore ye have need to seek him. The highest principle of acting in you is your own spirit, which is so corrupted that it can do nothing truly good, John xv. 5. And being without the Spirit, ye are without God in the world, and therefore without hope, while ye are so.

*Mot. 2.* Ye can have no saving benefit by Christ but by the Spirit. Ye can have no interest in Christ without him, Rom. viii. 9. and no access to God through Christ, but by him, Eph. ii. 18. While ye have not the Spirit, the redemption is indeed purchased, but, alas! it is not applied to you. Christ has died, but you have no interest in him, no saving benefit by him. There is a full treasure of grace in Christ, but, alas! ye want the key to open it. The bridegroom stands ready to receive you, but there is none to bring the bride to him, and she cannot go her alone.

*Mot. 3.* Without the Spirit ye are spiritually dead in sin, John vi. 63. When the soul is away, the body is dead; and when the Spirit is away, the soul is dead. The man cannot move in God's way, cannot perform one duty acceptably; for nothing is so but what is done in the Spirit, John iv. 24. Hence all ordinances and providences are lost on such an one; for he is like a dead tree, to which spring and winter are alike. Hence,

*Mot. 4.* Without the Spirit ye are undone for ever; without the Spirit, without Christ, Rom. viii. 9. without Christ, without God; and without God, without hope; therefore 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise,' Eph. ii. 12. The dead corpse may be kept a while; but when there are no hopes of the returning of the soul, it is buried in a grave: so without the Spirit ye may be kept a while, through God's patience; but the end will be, to be cast into the pit, and buried out of God's sight.

*Mot. last.* If ye get the Spirit, ye are made up for ever. For he is the leading benefit of Christ's purchase, which all the rest infallibly follow, Zech. xii. 10. When the Spirit comes, life comes, that shall never fail, John iv. 14. He will unite you to Christ, and then all is yours. He will enlighten, quicken, renew and sanctify you, subdue your cor-



ruptions, give grace, actuate and increase it, change you from glory to glory, and raise up your bodies at the last day to glory, Rom. viii. 11.

I shall conclude all with a few directions.

1. Pray earnestly for the Spirit, Luke xi. 13. God has made a promise of the Spirit, and gives that as a ground of your prayer for him, Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 37. 'A new Spirit will I put within you.—I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.' And although God regard not prayer as performed by one without the Spirit, yet he regards it as a means and ordinance of his own appointment, whereby the Spirit is conveyed into the hearts of his elect.

2. Wait and look for the Spirit in all ordinances of his appointment, Isa. xxxii. ult. They that would have the wind blow upon them, go out into the open air; though they cannot raise it, they wait where it blows, John iii. 8. Especially the preaching of the gospel is to be attended diligently for this end, 2 Cor. iii. 8. The man that had lain many years at the pool, at length saw the time that the angel moved the waters.

3. *Lastly*, Give up yourselves to the Spirit, Jer. xxxi. 18. Lay yourselves down at his feet, to be enlightened, quickened, and sanctified by him. Open the door of your hearts to receive him. And when the least good motion is found kindled in your hearts, cherish it as a tender bud of heaven; nourish the spark, and it will increase into a flame.

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#### OF UNION WITH CHRIST.

1 CORINTHIANS xii. 13—*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

**T**HE apostle in the preceding verse having asserted, that Christ mystical, *i. e.* Christ and believers, are one, making but one mystical body, in the words of the text does at once explain and confirm the same from the two sacraments of the New Testament, baptism, and the Lord's supper.

1. From the sacrament of baptism, where he shews us the blessed union made. And here consider,

1st. The parties united: on the one hand, *we all*; viz. who believe in Christ, as distinguished from unbelievers. On the other hand, Jesus Christ, whom he had just before mentioned, and who is here understood as implied in the one body, whereof he is the head, or principal part.

2dly, The uniting or joining of the parties, which is expressed by being *baptized into one body*, the sacramental sign being put for the thing signified: as if he had said, we are united into one body with Christ, which is signified and sealed by our baptism.

3dly, The efficient cause of the union, or the party uniting us to Christ, *one Spirit*, the one Spirit of Christ. It is by him we are baptised, and are joined to Christ. He casts the indissoluble knot; as Christ brings us to the Father, the Holy Spirit brings us to Christ, by faith which he works in us, and makes the marriage-tie between the King of saints and the daughter of Zion. This Spirit must needs be the infinite Spirit of God, since it is but one Spirit that knits all, not only as the author, but the bond of the union.

4thly, The result of this union, *one body*. Hence it comes to pass, that Christ and all believers are one mystical body; they are all joined to Christ and among themselves, as the head and members.

5thly, The character of the parties whom the Spirit unites to Christ. He confines not himself to any one party of sinners in the world, but takes them indifferently out of all sorts, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, whether they be bond or free men. He goes to unbelieving Jews that had rejected Christ for some time, and to unbelieving Gentiles that had not heard of him. And he unites them to Christ by working faith in them; for he deals with them that have reason, not as with stocks, knitting them without any action of their own, but as rational creatures, apprehending them, and working faith in them, whereby they apprehend Christ.

2. From the sacrament of the Lord's supper, where he shews us the blessed fruit of this union, *and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*. Here consider,

1st. The common benefit, the purchase of Christ's redemption; *one Spirit*, the leading comprehensive purchase of Christ's death. This is that Spirit poured on Christ without measure, to be communicated for life, and supplies of life, to all that come to him.

2dly, The participation of that benefit, which is expressed by being *made to drink into one Spirit*, the sacramental sign for the thing signified: As if he had said, We all partake of Christ's Spirit more and more to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, which is as necessary to us as drink to strengthen our bodies, which is signified and sealed by the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

3dly, The parties made partakers thereof, *we all*, who are united to Christ. As life goes before eating or drinking, so the union with Christ goes before communion in and partaking of the benefits of his redemption; and the former is the cause of the latter.

Hence we may see, That 'the Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.'

The great subject to be handled here, is the union betwixt Christ and believers. And here let us consider,

I. How Christ's redemption is applied to a sinner.

II. Shew that there is a real union betwixt Christ and believers.

III. What is that union.

IV. What are the bonds of it.

V. Who is the author and efficient cause of it.

VI. The properties of it.

VII. Apply.

I. Let us consider how Christ's redemption is applied to a sinner. It is done by way of uniting the sinner to Christ, as a plaister is applied to a sore, by laying the one upon the other. A sinner is interested in, and put in possession of Christ's redemption through union with him, 1 Cor. i. 30. 'Of him are ye in Christ Jesus.' Men must not think to stand afar from Christ, and partake of the benefits of his death, upon their praying to him for it, as the beggar on his crying gets of the rich man's money thrown to him; which I observe is the soul ruining notion many have of this matter. But he must unite with Christ, and so partake of the redemption purchased by Christ, as the poor widow drowned in debt, by marrying the rich man, is interested in his substance. It is with Christ himself that all saving benefits are given, Rom. viii. 32; and without him none such are received. Believe it, Sirs, that as Adam's sin could never have hurt you, unless ye had been in him, so Christ's redemption shall never sa-



vingly profit you, unless ye be in him, Eph. i. 7. 'In whom we have redemption through his blood.' I shall next shew,

II. That there is a real union betwixt Christ and believers. Some, to advance their legal scheme of doctrine, acknowledge no other union but a relative one betwixt Christ and believers, such as may be betwixt persons and things wholly separated. But that there is a real, true, and proper union betwixt Christ and believers, is evident if ye consider,

1. The several equivalent terms by which this union is expressed in scripture. Christ is said to be in believers, Col. i. 27. Rom. viii. 10. and they in him, 1 Cor. i. 30. He is said to dwell in them, and they in him, John vi. 56. They are said to abide in one another, John. xv. 4. Believers have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27. They are so joined, or agglutinated, as to be one Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17. To expound these of a mere relative union, such as is betwixt a king and his subjects, a master and his servants, is but to wrest scripture, and these phrases applied to such relatives would be extremely harsh, though they never so much agreed in judgment and affection.

2. The several real and proper unions which it is resembled to. It is resembled unto that betwixt the vine and the branches, John xv. 5. the head and the body, Eph. i. 22, 23. meat eaten and the eater, John vi. 56. yea, to that betwixt the Father and Christ, John xvii. 21. These are real proper unions, and so is this.

3. *Lastly*, If this union be not a true and real one, but a mere relative one, the sacrament of the supper is but a bare sign, and not a seal, exhibiting and applying Christ to believers. For without this real union, the feeding on Christ's body and blood truly and really in the sacrament cannot be; which yet is the doctrine of the scriptures, and of our Larger Catechism, proved from the words of institution, 'Take, eat, this is my body.' For if there be a true and real feeding, there must be a true and real union, as there is betwixt the food and our bodies into which it is incorporated.

III. I proceed to shew what is that union that takes place betwixt Christ and believers. There are three mysterious unions in our religion. (1.) The substantial union of the three persons in one Godhead. (2.) The personal union of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ. (3.) The mystical union betwixt Christ and believers, which is that

wherein Christ and believers, are so joined, that they are one Spirit, and one mystical body, 1 Cor. vi. 17. and xii. 13.

In this union the whole man is united to a whole Christ. The believing soul is united to him, Eph. iii. 17. His body also is united to him, 1 Cor. vi. 19. 1 Thess. iv. 14. They are united to him in his divine nature, Col. i. 27. and in his human nature, Eph. v. 30. and so through the Mediator unto God, 2 Cor. vi. 16.

IV. I go on to shew what are the bonds of this union, whereby Christ and believers become one. All corporal union is made by contact; but Christ is in heaven, and we on earth, and so we can have no such union with him; and if we had, what would it profit? John vi. 63. But this union is spiritual, 1 Cor. vi. 17. and so are the bonds of it. And they are two.

1. The Spirit on Christ's part, whereby he apprehendeth, taketh and keepeth hold of us, 1 John iii. ult. The same infinite Spirit that dwells in Christ, he communicates to his elect in their effectual calling, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. So that one Spirit living and acting in both, in Christ as the head, and in believers as the members, they truly become one by that means. And the distance betwixt Christ and believers, as great as is betwixt heaven and earth, cannot hinder the joining of our souls and bodies to his, since the Spirit is an infinite Spirit, every where present. And seeing the same Spirit is in both, they are thereby made really one, notwithstanding of the distance; even as if there were a man who, standing on the earth his head should reach the stars; yet since one soul animates his head and feet, notwithstanding of the distance betwixt them, (as well as those of the lowest dwarf), they do still make but one body. And as in the case of a tree-leg fixed to the body, and touching upon it, it is not for all that a part of the body, because it is not animated by the soul: so, on the other hand, where one spirit is in two, there is a real union, although these two do not touch one another, as in the case of Ezekiel's wheels, Ezek. i. 21. All which shews that there is nothing contrary to reason in this union.

2. Faith on the believer's part, Eph. iii. 17. 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.' Thereby the believer apprehends, takes, and keeps hold of Christ. It is by that we receive Christ, John i. 12. come unto him, John vi.

35. and feed on him, ver. 56. This faith is that true one, whereby a sinner heartily receives and rests on Christ for all his salvation. And no distance can hinder it to ascend unto the Mediator.

Now, since Christ cannot be seen with our eyes, nor touched with our hands, while he is in heaven and we are on earth, and that he is not known to us but by his word of the gospel, what other way can we unite with him, but believing on this unseen Christ? So that faith is the only mean on our part. And its fitness for this work appears, if ye consider,

(1.) That faith is a self-emptying an creature-emptying grace, throwing off and putting away all those things that might keep the soul at a distance from Christ, Phil. iii. 8. And,

(2.) It is as much fitted to receive an unseen Christ and salvation, which appears to us only in the word, as the hand to receive what can be received into it. For in the word Christ offers himself and all his salvation to us, which we cannot lay hold of by any bodily action whatsoever; but faith crediting the testimony, consenting to, and resting on the offered Christ, with his salvation, does actually get the same, as sure as there is truth in the word of the gospel.

V. The next head is to shew who is the author and efficient cause of this union. The party that makes this blessed union is the Holy Spirit of Christ, and none other, as the text tells us. As our Lord Jesus Christ took his own human nature into personal union with him, in the womb of the virgin Mary, by the agency of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her, Luke i. 35. so he takes sinners into mystical union with him, by the agency of this same Spirit. We may take it up thus:

1. The Spirit of Christ comes in the word, and enters into the heart of the elect sinner dead in sin. The word is the great vehicle of divine appointment, wherein the Spirit is given, Gal. iii. 2. And in that he comes and makes room for himself, and takes it up, 1 Thess. i. 5. John vi. 63. And the Spirit is a Spirit of life, a Spirit of faith, and one with Christ, as he is one of the three persons in the one Godhead. So that when he is come into the soul, it is quickened, chan-



ged, regenerated, and really united to Christ passively, in so far as the Spirit is Christ's Spirit.

2. That quickening Spirit now entered into the elect soul works faith in it; and thus only true faith is wrought, not from our natural powers, Eph. ii. 8. Col. ii. 12. Hereby the soul lays hold on Christ, and actually unites with him. Being quickened and actuated by the Spirit, it acts in believing.

The whole may be illustrated by the case of Lazarus rising from the dead. With the voice of Christ, 'Lazarus, come forth,' his soul re-entered into his body, so he was alive again; and being alive and quickened, he moved and came forth unto Christ. So the dead soul, being quickened by the Spirit coming into it, moves and comes into Christ. And thus ye may see,

That there is a twofold receiving of Christ. (1.) A passive receiving of him, wherein Christ comes in by his Spirit into the dead soul, quickening it, and joins himself unto that soul. Here the soul does nothing, but is inhabited by Christ, through the Spirit, which disposeth the sinner to believe. And this is the case of gracious infants, who are truly united to Christ. though because of their infancy they cannot act faith. (2.) An active receiving of him, when the soul having faith wrought in it by the spirit actually believes, and receives Christ, putting forth the hand of the soul to embrace him, and so actively joins itself unto the Lord.

VI. I proceed to show the properties of this union. I have anticipated some of these, under other heads already, and shown you that it is,

1. A true, real, and proper union, not a mere relative one.

2. A spiritual union, 1 Cor. vi. 17. 'He that is joined unto the Lord, is one Spirit.' Though it is an union of bodies as well as of spirits, yet the union is not corporal, for the bodies do not touch one another; but spiritual, being joined by spiritual bands. I add, that it is,

3. A mysterious union. The apostle calls it a 'great mystery,' Eph. v. 32; 'a glorious mystery,' Col. i. 27.—And therefore, by the by, it is not a mere relative union, but a true and real one; for a relative union betwixt Christ and believers, is no mystery, but a plain truth easily acknowledged by all, and perceived. But there is need of a true, lively, humble faith to believe this, which is so far above the

reach of our natural capacities, and which natural reason is so ready to object against; but faith will believe it over all these impediments.

4. A most close and intimate union. They are joined as those things that are glued together, 1 Cor. vi. 17. The believer has Christ in him, and he is in Christ; and they are united as the meat with the body, which is incorporated into it, John vi. 56. See Eph. v. 30.

5. An indissoluble union. Once in Christ, ever in him, John x. 28, 29. What man will lose a member of his body, if he can help it? Who then can imagine that Christ will lose a member of his? The apostle bids a defiance to all things for separating the saints from the love of Christ, and consequently from union with him, that is the ground of the love of complacency, Rom. viii. 35, &c. This union abides uninterrupted by death: for sleeping saints sleep in Christ, while in the grave, 1 Thess. iv. 14.

6. *Lastly*, It is the leading, comprehensive, fundamental privilege of believers, 1 Cor. iii. 23. 'Ye are Christ's.' All their other privileges are derived from and grafted upon this, their justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification. All these grow on this root; and where that is wanting, none of these can be. All acceptable obedience comes from the soul's union with Christ, John xv. 4. Hence faith is the principal grace, as uniting us to Christ.

I proceed now to the application of this subject. I shall press out the juice of this pomegranate unto you in uses of information, trial, and exhortation.

USE I. Of information. It informs us,

1. Concerning the saints in general, that they are highly dignified beyond all the rest of the world. They are all members of Christ, of the blood royal of heaven, even those of them that some would disdain to rub shoulders with, Eph. v. 30. And thus we have these lessons.

(1.) Wo to those that maltreat, oppress, or persecute any of the saints; for what they do against them, they do against Christ, as doing it to the members of Christ's body, Acts ix. 4. And he will resent it, and plead the cause as his own cause, accurately and exactly, so as to make men accountable for omissions of duty to them, far more for commissions of evil against them, Matth xxv. 42—45. So that the Saints

have good reason to lay aside all thoughts of revenge; for their Redeemer is mighty.

(2.) They are the best bestowed good turns that are done to the godly for Christ's sake. For as they are done to them, they are done to Christ, since they are one with him. And our Lord will take it so, and 'graciously reward it, Mat. xv. 35—40. Therefore the apostle gives that exhortation Gal. vi. 10. 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.' Have ye any love to Christ? love is communicative; ye cannot reach the Head, but the members ye have always with you. Say not then ye want occasion to testify your love to him. It is the best seedness ye can make, and will bring the most plentiful harvest.

(3.) Believers are members one of another, Eph. iv. 25.—There is a true and real sibness betwixt all the godly, as there is betwixt the legs and arms of one body, or one leg and another. For since they are all united to Christ, it necessarily follows that they are all united among themselves, 1 Cor. xii. 12. And therefore they are called 'one bread,' having an union and communion among themselves, sealed by the sacrament. O! if this great truth were believed, what love, what sympathy, what care for one another's temporal and spiritual welfare would there be among the godly! There would not be such strangeness, alienation of affections, nor such a Cain like unconcernedness about one another among them.

(4.) It is a thankless office to rend and divide the church of Christ, to tear Christ's seamless coat. Many make no bones of separating from, but place religion in, casting off, communion with those, who, their consciences must acknowledge, do yet remain united to Christ. They say, they can have no communion with them without sin. I grant, that if one leg go into a mire and be defiled, the other ought not to follow, nor one saint communicate with another in sin; ay, but no man in his wits would cut off either of the legs in that case. But the body of Christ is not so tenderly handled, though we owe more tenderness to it than to our own natural bodies. Nay, but let men abhor communion with such as much as they will, they shall either have the most close and intimate communion with them, or they shall have none with Christ, forasmuch as there are not two



Christ's to head the separate bodies ; and if they be both united to one Christ, they have the most intimate union and communion one with another.

2. It informs us concerning some great and weighty principles of our holy religion, clearly deducible from this grand point.

(1.) The saints shall persevere in grace, and can never totally nor finally fall away from it. For there is an indissoluble union betwixt Christ and them. This secures the believer's life, that it can never be lost, Col. iii. 3. The Spirit, the bond of this union, never leaves his habitation, John xiv. 16. and iv. 14. This keeps a seed always in him for God, 1 John iii. 9. And Christ will lose none of his members, John xvii. 12. It is true, if the firmness of this union depended entirely on the hold the sinner has of Christ by faith, it might be broke; but it depends on the hold that Christ has of the sinner by his Spirit, as the nurse has of the babe in her arms.

(2.) Faith in Christ is the great comprehensive gospel-duty. Many have mean thoughts of faith, in comparison of other duties. But the scripture gives it the preference, John vi. 29. 1 John iii. 23. When we bid you believe, we bid you get all privileges, and do all duties; for believing is the way to both, in so far as it unites the soul to Christ, which is the fundamental privilege of the saints. If ye believe, ye do all in effect, as he who takes hold of the first link of a chain, has hold of all the links. If ye believe not, ye do nothing; for without faith, ye are without Christ, and without Christ ye can do nothing, John xv. 5. compare Heb. xi. 6.

(3.) There is a solid rational ground for the doctrine of our justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ. Let profane men deride it as a putative or imaginary righteousness and justification, to make way for their own works; and let the corrupters of the Protestant doctrine set up faith, repentance, and new obedience, as our evangelical righteousness, upon which we are justified, as the fulfilling of the gospel-law; we need no other righteousness for justification but Christ's. For a believer is by faith united to Christ. Having this union with him, we have a communion with him in his righteousness, which is ours, since we are one with him, and being ours must be imputed to us, or reckoned ours on the most solid ground. Christ is the believer's Surety by his own

voluntary act, the debtor's consent by faith, the Judge's approbation in the word. What then is more rational than that this righteousness be imputed to the believer, and he thereupon justified?

(4.) The way to obtain true repentance and sanctification, is to believe. For these are the benefits of Christ's redemption, Acts v. 31. Matth. i. 21. and these are applied by the Spirit working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling. How can one think to repent truly, or to be holy, when he is not united to Christ, John xv. 5. or to be united without faith? As soon shall the falling dew pierce through the rock, as one shall be able to do any of these out of Christ, whom the Father has constituted the head of influences, and on whom all our fruitfulness depends.

(5.) *Lastly*, The bodies of believers shall have a glorious resurrection, Rom. viii. 11. There is an union betwixt Christ and the bodies of believers, which death does not break off, 1 Thess. iv. 14. and therefore they shall not always lie in the dust; nor will Christ lose any of his members. The Lord says to a dying saint as to Jacob, Gen. xlv. 3, 4. 'I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt [the grave.]—I will go down with thee into Egypt [the grave]; and I will also surely bring thee up again.'

3. This doctrine informs us concerning the happiness of the saints. To be united with Christ is the foundation of all happiness, and the richest privileges.

(1.) Christ is theirs, Cant. ii. 16. 'My Beloved is mine,' says the spouse. They have an interest in his person. He is their Lord, their Elder Brother, their Husband, yea, their Head. Whatsoever he is, or is in him, they may reckon upon it as theirs, for to make them happy. The fulness of the Godhead dwells in him, and so God is their God and their Father, John xx. 17. His mercy is theirs to pity them, his power to protect them, his all-seeing eye to direct them, &c. Thus they have a fountain to go to that never runs dry, a treasure that is never exhausted, a table that will never be drawn, &c.

(2.) What Christ has is theirs, and he is the heir of all things, so all is theirs, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. He has all that has him to whom all things belong. Union infers a com-

munion betwixt Christ and believers. His active and passive obedience is theirs for their justification, as if they had done it themselves. His Spirit, word, and providences, are theirs for their sanctification. His power in heaven is theirs for their glorification. In a word, his broad covenant, with all the precious promises in it, is theirs to make them happy here and hereafter, 2 Pet. i. 4,

(3.) They are perfectly safe from the wrath of God, Rom. viii. 1. ‘There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.’ Their sins are still very displeasing in the sight of God, and deserve condemnation as well as those of others. But being in Christ, they are beyond the reach of the curse of the law; they are got into the city of refuge, where the avenger of blood cannot attack them. They are under the mild government of the covenant of grace, which threatens fatherly anger and temporal chastisements in case of transgression, but no more, Psal. lxxxix. 30.—33.

(4.) The Lord takes pleasure in and accepts their persons, graces and duties, though attended with manifold imperfections. Their persons are accepted, though a body of death hangs about them, Eph. i. 6. Their graces, though there is much dross in them, yet because the image of Christ is on them, they are accepted, Cant. v. 1. Their duties, though far from the perfection which the law requires, are accepted, Cant. ii. 14. Their will is accepted for the deed, and their grief for the want of will, for the will itself, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

(5.) All their wants lie upon Christ, Col. ii. 10. As the union gives him a communion with him in what is his, so he has a communion with them in what is theirs; so that Christ is to answer for all their debt, poverty, and wants, as he that marries the widow in debt, Psal. lv. 22. So they look and may look to him for all, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

USE II. Ye may try by this, whether the Spirit has applied to you the redemption purchased by Christ. If so be, then ye are united to Christ. If men only apply that redemption to themselves, it will be found presumption, and not faith, and no union with Christ; and the plaister thus applied will not stick. But where the right application is made, there the sinner is united to Jesus Christ. Ye may try whether ye be united to Christ or not by these marks. The general.



*Mark* is, If ye be disjointed from what ye were formerly knit to, and carried to Christ for all. It is with the soul united to Christ as with an ingrafted branch, which is broken from off the tree it naturally grew on, and is joined to another, from which it draws all its sap. If ye be united to Christ, ye are disjointed and broken off from the natural stock, and ingrafted into Christ. Ye may take up this in these three things.

1. Ye have given up with the law as a covenant of works, and betaken yourselves wholly to the grace of Christ in the second covenant. That is to be 'dead to the law, *and* married to Christ,' Rom. vii. 4. Ye are broken off from all your natural confidences before the Lord, founded in any thing whatsoever that is not Christ or in Christ, and lay your whole confidence before the Lord on him. So that he is your all in point of confidence before the throne, Phil. iii. 8. This is a sure evidence, Phil. iii. 3. Matth. v. 3. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit;' where it is observable, that this leads the way, and is to be carried through all the rest of the duties and graces following. This is the very nature of faith as it unites to Christ.

2. Your hearts are separated and disjointed from sin, and labouring to take up their everlasting rest in Christ, as the centre of your desires, Psalm cxix. 128. and lxxiii. 25. Men's desires naturally go out after the world and their lusts; and if they have any desires after Christ, it is but a desire of him together with their lusts. But grace turns the heart against these, and kindles desires of Christ, instead of lusts, Matth. xiii. 45, 46. This is a sure evidence, Matth. v. 6. It is true, while here the saints are not separated from sin in action, Psal. lxxv. 3. But in affection they are, Rom. vii. 24. and in that respect Christ has the crown, and lusts the cross, Gal. v. 24. And thus God judges of them, 2 Cor. viii. 12. 'For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.'

3. Ye are carried out of yourselves into Jesus Christ, Matth. xvi. 24. To a natural man his sweet self is his all; but grace turns self off the throne, and sets up Christ in its stead. While the man is separated from Christ, he has separate interests from him: but when united to Christ, these are all swallowed up in Christ's interest, as the rivers, when

they go into the sea, have no more their separate channels. Ye know the difference betwixt a married and an unmarried woman. The unmarried woman lives upon her own, and pleases herself; the married lives on her husband's, and pleases him. Such is the difference betwixt one separated from, and one united to Christ, Psal. xlv. 10.

(1.) The soul in a state of separation from Christ lives on its own, acts from itself as the highest principle, stands on its own legs, as it were, and takes its own weight to bear (Prov. xxviii. 26.) in point of sanctification. It is like that nominal marriage, Isa. iv. 1. 'And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.' And therefore such a one is called 'sensual, having not the spirit,' Jude, ver. 19. one that has no higher principle than his own soul.

The soul united to Christ lives on his, or by him, John vi. 57. Being sensible of its utter impotency for good, it flees to him, his Spirit and grace, and relies on him for strength, Jer. xxxi. 18. This is the life of faith. The one, like Goliath, goes forth in confidence of his strength, sword, and spear; the other, like the stripling David, goes forth in the name of the Lord. This is a sure evidence, Phil. iii. 3. Cant. viii. 5.

(2.) The man in a state of separation lives for himself, as his chief end, in point of sanctification too, Hos. x. 1. In what good he does, his great end is to serve and please himself, not to serve and please the Lord. And it can be no otherwise with the natural man; for as the mouth of a river can be no higher than its spring, so he that acts from himself can never but act for self. And thus God regards not their service.

But the man united to Christ lives to the Lord, Rom. xiv. 7, 8. Phil. i. 21. The gracious soul, like the married woman, cares how to please her husband, would fain be holy, and endeavours to be so, that she may be like him. The soul united to Christ is not barren of good works, John xv. 5; but brings them forth to him, Rom. vii. 4; the great end of their duties being not to content themselves, but to walk before him in all well-pleasing. This also is a sure evidence, Phil. i. 21. 'To me to live is Christ.'

USE ult. Of exhortation. O be exhorted,

1. To be deeply concerned for union with Christ. O, sinner, take no rest till thou be in him. Seek to unite with him, and live no longer in a state of separation from him. To press this, consider,

*Mot.* 1. Thou may be doing, but thou canst do nothing to purpose, while not united to Christ, John xv. 5. None of thy duties will be accepted of God, however great they be in thy own eyes, or those of others, Eph. i. 6. An ox offered on the altar of Beth-el would have been rejected, when two young doves were accepted on the altar of Jerusalem. They want the inworking of Christ's Spirit, James v. 16. the incense of Christ's intercession, and therefore cannot be accepted of the Father.

*Mot.* 2. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, the redemption purchased by Christ, till thou be united with him, Eph. ii. 12. It is not thine till it be applied to thee; and it is not applied but in the way of union with him. The ark, doubtless, could have saved more than it did; but what availed it to many that there was an ark, since they were not in it? Though there be a remedy that would cure thee, what does it avail thee, while it is not applied to thee?

*Mot.* 3. Miserable and dangerous beyond expression is thy state while thou art not united to Christ, Eph. ii. 12. Poor soul, thou art sitting in the region and shadow of death, in the suburbs of hell. The wrath of God is hovering over thy head, though thou perceivest it not, John iii. ult. 'He that believeth not,—the wrath of God abideth on him.' Thou art secure but far from safety. The deluge of wrath is at hand, but thou hast no ark. The avenger of blood is at thy heels, and thou art not got into the city of refuge; the destroying angel is coming through, and thy door-posts are not sprinkled with blood yet; and fire and brimstone are ready to be rained down upon thee, but thou hast no Zoar to flee to.

*Mot.* ult. Christ offers to unite with you, Rev. iii. 20. even with the worst and vilest of you all. He sends out his ambassadors to gain your consent to this union, and win your hearts. Behold the former of all things making suit to his own clay, Matth. xxii. 4. 'All things are ready; come unto the marriage.' Will ye slight and despise this union, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life?



2. Labour to get the Spirit, who casts the inviolable knot. If ye have not the Spirit of Christ, ye can be none of his.

3. *Lastly*, Believe. Christ and all his redemption are in your offer. Believe his word, embrace him in it, let your whole soul say amen to the blessed bargain. Consent to the gospel-offer, saying, Henceforth then he is mine, and I am his. Christ does not apprehend a soul by his Spirit, as a man takes a tree in his arms, but as one friend another, who mutually clasp about one another. Do not delay this work; do not say, Ye dare not do it, since without it ye cannot be united to Christ.

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OF EFFECTUAL CALLING.

2 TIM. i. 9.—*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*

THE mystical union betwixt Christ and a sinner is brought to pass in the effectual calling of a sinner, which I come now to explain, and we have in the text. The apostle had exhorted Timothy to a confident adhering to the doctrine of the gospel, over the belly of afflictions for the cause of God; and in the text shews a good reason that both he himself and Timothy had to do so, taken from what God had done for them.

1. What the Lord had done for them. (1.) *Saved* them; namely, from sin and wrath; i. e. had brought them into a state of salvation out of a state of sin and misery, applied Christ's salvation to them, which is so effectual that never one dies of the disease after it is applied, and therefore may be said thereupon to be *saved*. (2.) *Called* them, namely, by his Spirit, when they were at a distance from him; he called them to himself, *saved* and *called*; not that he first saved, and then called them; but he saved them by calling them; which shews this call to be an effectual call. Therefore also it is called *an holy calling*, not only as proceeding from an holy God, but as making the called holy too.

2, The cause of the Lord's doing this for them. (1.) Negatively; not for any merit of theirs, they had done no-

thing to move God to call them more than others. (2.) Positively : [1.] His eternal purpose of love and salvation to them, as the apostle explains it, Rom. viii. 30. They were from eternity predestinated to salvation and the means of it, and therefore in complement of that purpose were savingly called. [2.] His grace or free favour given them in and through Jesus Christ, which is said to have been *given* them *before the world began*, from eternity ; namely, virtually in the decree, which secured the real giving them it in time, as much as if they had it in hand. And this account of the causes of this call does further evince it to be effectual calling that is meant.

The doctrine of the text is.

DOCT. 'All that partake of Christ's salvation are effectually called.'

Here I shall briefly explain to you the nature of effectual calling, and then apply it.

Effectual calling is the first entrance of a soul into the state of grace, the first step by which God's eternal purpose of love descends unto sinners, and we again ascend towards the glory to which we are chosen. And, upon the matter, it is the same with conversion and regeneration. I shall shew,

I. What the effectual call in the general is.

II. Who they are that are effectually called.

III. Whence and whither are they called that are effectually called.

IV. What makes the call effectual to some, when it is not so to others.

V. What is the necessity of their being thus effectually called.

VI. I shall more particularly explain the nature of effectual calling.

1. I am to shew what the effectual call in the general is. An effectual call is opposed to an ineffectual one. An effectual call is the call that gains its real intent ; that is to say, when the party called comes upon the call. An ineffectual call is that which gains not the real intent of it, but falls short thereof, the party called not answering and obeying the call. To apply this to our purpose, all that hear the gospel are called ; but,

1. To some of them it is ineffectual, and these are the most part of gospel-hearers, Matth. xx. 16. 'For many be called,

but few chosen.' They are called, invited, and obtested to come to Christ; but it is but the singing of a song to a deaf man that is not moved with it, Prov. i. 24. The real intentment of the call is lost upon them. Though the intent of God the great caller can never be lost, who says, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,' Isa. xlv. 10. yet the design of the thing is so. Though they are called, yet they come not to Christ, they sit his call, to their own destruction.

2. To others it is effectual, and these are but *few*, Matt. xx. 16. forecited. They get the call, and they rise and come away to Christ. It is not only the intent of the call, but of him that called them, to have them home to himself; and they receive not the grace of the gospel in vain. While others at best do but play about the bait, they greedily embrace it, and are catched, according to that, 'Ye shall be fishers of men.' They come away like Lot out of Sodom, while others account the call in effect but a jest, and so abide and perish in the overthrow.

II. I come now to shew who they are that are thus effectually called. The text tells us, that this effectual call is according to God's purpose and free grace in Christ; and so it follows, that the elect, and they only are thus called, Rom. viii. 30. Acts xiii. 48. Others may be outwardly called by the ministry of the word, and have some common operations of the Spirit too, but are never effectually called. The bow is shot at a venture among the hearers of the gospel; but God, that knoweth who are his, directs the arrow, so as to make it hit right. O the riches and freedom of grace that appears in this! For,

1. It is men, and not fallen angels, that are called, though they should have been preferred, if God had respected the dignity of nature among his lost creatures. But 'the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day,' Jude 6. There is special love appears in that, 'Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men,' Prov. viii. 4. O may we not say, as Psal. viii. 4. 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?'

2. It is some men, and not others, that are called effectually, and these naturally in as bad and sinful a condition as



others, Eph. ii. 12. ‘ At the time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.’ They cannot pretend here, that they made the difference by their works; for says the text, *He saved us, and called us, not according to our works.* Nay, oft-times, they are worse than many others, such as fornicators, idolaters, &c. of whom Paul to the Corinthians, 1 Epist. vi. 11. says, ‘ Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.’ And says that apostle of himself, 1 Tim. i. 13. ‘ I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But I obtained mercy.’ Oft-times grace chuses to work on the most knotty piece of timber, which there is the least hope of.

3. *Lastly*, It is for the most part those who have the least advantages as to their outward condition in the world. For says the apostle, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. ‘ Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.’ The Lord takes some of the greatest wits, of the greatest power, and the best blood in the world, but not many such. But often grace passeth by the learned man, and wise, and sits down and teaches babes in comparison of them. He passes by the rich, the noble, and the gentle, and brings the meaner sort, the kinless things [*ta agene*], into a match with the Son of God, and an alliance with Heaven.

III. I proceed to shew whence and whither they are called who are effectually called. That I may answer this in a few words, observe, that there was a blessed bond of society betwixt God and his rational creatures, and among themselves, till sin entered, and then all was shaken loose. As it was at the building of Babel, so it was at the entrance of sin, there was a great scattering; sinners were separated from God, and from the holy angels, and scattered up and down on the mountains of vanity. For remedy of this, God appointed Jesus Christ the Head, in whom an elect world might meet

again with God, and be gathered together among themselves, Eph. i. 10. 'That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.' 1 Pet. ii. 25. 'For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.' So then they that are effectually called, are,

1. Called out of the world that lieth in wickedness, 1 John v. 19. And hence the *church* has its name in the prophetic and apostolical writings, *Ekklesia*; q. d. a company called out from among others, a gathered congregation. And so the gathering of them is made the great work of Jesus Christ, the Founder of the church, John xi. 52. The elect of God, in their natural condition, are lost sheep gone astray among the devils goats; effectual calling is the bringing them out from among them, back to Christ's fold. They are the lost groat lying hid among the dust of the nasty house of this world; effectual calling is the taking them out from among that dust, and restoring them to the use for which they were designed.

Thus Christ bespeaks his spouse (for that work is still going on, and will be so, till they be quit of the world, soul and body, 1 Thess. v. 24.) 'Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house\*.' Psal. xiv. 10.\* 'come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards.' They are called away from the sinful and miserable state of the world, from their ways manners and work; in a word, out of their society, so that though they be in the world, they are no more of it, and therefore do they fare so ill in it, John xv. 19. Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'

2. Called unto Jesus Christ, and through him to the blessed society of another world. So the call runs, Matth. xi. 28. 'Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' The society they are called and come to is that of God himself, the holy angels, all the saints in heaven and earth which have gone before them, Jesus

\* \* The author has some excellent sermons on these texts, not yet printed.

Christ being the blessed bond of the society, the centre of union wherein they meet, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. 'Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Here the call is, 'All things are ready; come unto the marriage,' Matth. xxii. 4.

Thus they are, like Noah, called into the ark, where they will be safe when the deluge of wrath sweeps away the world of the ungodly. Like Lot, they are called unto Zoar, where they will be safe while fire and brimstone is rained on those that stay behind. They are called to the feast on the great sacrifice, Christ crucified, while others perish for want; to the partaking of the benefits of Christ's redemption, while others have neither part nor lot in that matter, but must fall a sacrifice for their own sins to avenging justice. The particulars they are called to, will serve them to tell through eternity.

IV. I proceed to shew what makes the call effectual to some, when it is not so to others. Negatively,

1. It is neither the piety, parts, nor seriousness of those who are employed to carry the gospel-call to sinners, 1 Cor. iii. 7. Indeed, if moral suasion were sufficient to bring sinners back to God; men that have the art of persuading, and can speak movingly and seriously, could not fail to have vast numbers of converts. But that work is not so brought about, Luke xvi. ult. Hence said Abraham to the rich man in hell, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.' Never did these, conjunctly or severally, appear in any, as in Christ, who 'spake as never man spake.' But behold the issue, John xii. 37, 38. 'But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, 'Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?'

2. Neither is it one that uses his own free-will better than another does, Rom. ix. 6. 'It is not of him that willeth,



nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.' For every man will be unwilling till the power from another quarter make him willing, John vi. 44. If it were so, one man should make himself to differ from another in that grand point. But hear what the Apostle Paul says, 1 Cor. iv. 7. 'Who maketh thee to differ from another?' Men are dead in trespasses and sins, and such cannot difference themselves.

2. Positively. We may say in this case, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord.' It is the Spirit of the Lord, accompanying the call of the word, that makes it effectual, John vi. 63. Hence days of the plentiful effusion of the Spirit are good days for the take of souls, and contrarywise, when the Spirit is restrained, Psal. cx. 3. Therefore Isaiah resolves the question thus, 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' The report may reach the ears, but it is the arm of the Lord that must open the heart, as it did that of Lydia. Mahomet II. the Turkish emperor, having desired to see Scanderbeg's scymitar, said, that he saw nothing in it more than ordinary; the other returned him answer, that the virtue of the weapon depended on the strength of his arm.

V. It may be asked, What necessity is there for their being thus called? The necessity of it is manifest to all that know their natural case.

1. They are far off, Eph, ii. 13. far from God, and Christ, and all good, Eph. ii. 12. Hence the call is, 'Draw nigh to God.' We are at a distance from him naturally; not a distance of place, for God is every where, Acts xvii. 27. but of opposition, as far from him as war from peace, black from white, and hell from heaven. Our nature is contrary to his, and our will to his will, Rom. viii. 7. And there is no bringing us to him but by a very powerful and effectual call, whereby the sinner is irresistibly drawn, John vi. 44. 'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.'

2. They are hard and fast asleep, and they need this call, Eph. v. 14 'Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' The ship they are in is every moment in hazard of being swallowed up of the waves, for the storm of wrath is gone out against it; but, like Jonah, they are down in the sides of the ship, know no-

thing of the matter to purpose, but are fast asleep. All their spiritual senses are locked up, they can neither see nor hear. Ministers cry, conscience cries, Awake thou sleeper, but to no purpose; if they be disturbed, they lay down their heads again, and take yet a little sleep, a little slumber, though they should never awaken till they be in the bottom of the deep. And thus on they sleep, till the Spirit of the Lord call them effectually.

3. If they were awakened, they know not where to go to, Acts ii. 37. When they find the house on fire about their heads, they know not how to make their escape. The law-light that awakens them, cannot let them see Christ. He is preached and pointed out in the word, but they cannot take up the city of refuge, nor the way that leads to it, 1 Cor. ii. 14. until the Spirit of the Lord call them by his power, and they hear the voice behind them, saying, ‘This is the way walk ye in it.’ Christ is a veiled Saviour to the natural man, till his eyes be opened.

4. If they did know where to go to, they are not willing to go thither, John v. 40. They are naturally unwilling to leave their lusts; all the milk and honey of the heavenly Canaan held forth in the gospel, cannot wean their hearts from the flesh-pots of Egypt. To leave a lust is like the cutting off of a right hand. And in this respect they need a powerful call, such a word from the Lord himself as makes the mountains to shake, the rocks to rent, and the graves to give up their dead, and the whale to vomit up Jonah. And particularly they are naturally unwilling to come to Christ, and will not be made willing till a day of power, Psal. cx. 3. When they are convinced of their disease, yet they cannot think to employ that Physician, or undergo his method of cure. Hence so many awakened sinners employ physicians of no value; they will go to the law that wounded them, they will watch, pray, mourn, and macerate their own bodies, rather than believe. For there is a peculiar enmity in man’s nature against the gospel-way of salvation. So there is a necessity of an effectual call.

5. If they were willing to go to Christ, yet being awakened, they dare not venture, guilt so stares them in the face, Jer. ii. 25. ‘Thou said’st, There is no hope.’ While the man is asleep, it is nothing to him to believe, to come to Christ; like people that walk in their sleep, they can go any where

fearlessly. But when he is awakened, it is not so easy. He will then be like Adam, hiding himself on hearing the voice of the Lord, and will not come till he be called by the Lord himself. Hence so many words of grace heaped on one another in gospel-invitations, Isa. lv. 7, 8, 9. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.' For the Lord knows, that however the sinner unawakened thinks coming to Christ a light thing, yet when once awakened, doubts and fears will be going as thick as dust in the sweeping of a dry floor.

6. *Lastly*, If they durst come, yet they cannot come, unless they be drawn, John vi. 44. forecited. Sinners naturally are not only asleep, but dead in sins. And no less power is requisite to bring them than to raise the dead, and therefore this call is a voice that raiseth the dead, John v. 25. The product of this call is a new creation, Eph. ii. 10. compare Rom. iv. 17.

VI. *Lastly*, I shall more particularly explain the nature of effectual calling. Ye see it is the work of the Lord's Spirit; and there is a twofold work of the Spirit on the elect soul in effectual calling; one on the understanding, and the other on the will.

FIRST, On the understanding. This is the leading faculty of the soul, which by sin is overspread with darkness, Eph. v. 8. Satan finishes his work here, who, when he has got the soul asleep, shuts door and window, and draws the curtains, that the light may not enter, that so the soul may sleep the sleep of death; does as the Philistines did with Samson, puts out the sinner's eyes, when his strength is gone. And God begins his work here, as in the first creation, so in the second creation, 'The earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light,' Gen. i. 2, 3. Now, the work of the Spirit herein is twofold.



FIRST, An illumination of the soul from mount Sinai. And that is conviction of sin and misery, John xvi. 8. or the law-work. The Spirit of the Lord speaks to the soul as it were out of the midst of the fire; but there is blackness, darkness, and tempest, mixed with this light. And here consider the matter, the effects, the means, and the depth, of this conviction.

*First*, The matter of this conviction which is twofold.

1. Sin, John xvi. 8. 'He will reprove the world of sin.' The Spirit of the Lord convinces the man that he is a sinner, and sets his particular sins in order before him, Psal. l. 21. Then sins that were out of mind, as dead and buried, have a fearful resurrection, Rom. vii. 9. The spirit of bondage leads his prisoner in chains, through the several parts and steps of his life, to his very birth; and shews him convincingly his sins in them: lets him see such ill in sin as he never saw before, how heinously God takes it, and that with the several aggravations thereof.

2. Misery, John xvi. 8. The Spirit of the Lord convinces him, that he is lost and undone, Luke xv. 17. Being convicted and found guilty, sentence passes on him within his own breast, whereby he sees himself doomed to eternal death. He is convinced, as if an angel from heaven should tell him, that he is under God's wrath and curse, and that therefore, if he die in that case, he will perish for ever. He sees God to be his enemy; his word to speak no good of him, and all God's creatures his enemies in some sort ready armed against him.

*Secondly*, The effects of it are these three especially.

1. Remorse, Acts ii. 37. 'They were pricked in their hearts.' The man's conscience now galls him, and he is stung to the heart by the serpent which he hugged so kindly. Waves of killing grief and sorrow go over his soul, for his bypast folly and madness. He sees he has been murdering his own soul, and he groans out an elegy over his dead self.

2. Terror, Acts xvi. 27. as in the case of the Phillippian jailor. He sees now how he has to do with a holy just God, and how fearful a thing it is to fall into his hands. Horror takes hold on him, because of the judgments which he valued no more than the shadow of the mountains before. Then the stoutest sinner will quake at the shaking of a leaf,

within his bosom, at a thought of death and eternity. A word from the Lord will pierce like a sword.

3. Anxiety, Acts ii. 37. The soul is then stretched on the rack, and would fain know if there be any hope. Sometimes it hopes, sometimes fears, but always would fain be delivered. This anxiety will fill head, and heart, and hand, and swallow up all other cares; for then the soul sees the truth of that saying, 'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' Mat. xvi. 26.

*Thirdly*, The means by which this conviction is wrought. The Spirit of the Lord makes use of the word for that effect, and particularly of the law. The elect soul is brought prisoner to Mount Sinai, and there the Spirit of the Lord reads a dreadful lecture of the fiery law unto it. And here,

1. By the commands, the Spirit convinces of sin, Rom. vii. 7. The law is held out in its spirituality, and it proves to be the candle of the Lord, searching the innermost parts of the belly; a looking glass, wherein one gets such a sight of himself as he never had before.

2. By the threatenings and curse of the law, the Spirit convinces of misery. There they read their doom, Gal. iii. 10. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' Then every command appears fenced with a curse, and so each of them writes death to the sinner. And thus the law exacting perfect conformity to it, and binding wrath and sin together, binds over the sinner to death.

*Fourthly*, The depth of this conviction. This conviction, or law-work, is not alike in all; but it is deep enough, and but enough, when,

1. The sinner is not only convinced of the sins of his life, lips, and heart, but also of the sin of his nature, Rom. vii. 14. He must be convinced of the corrupt disposition of his soul, whereby he is fitted for all evil, and unfit for any good; for if he see not where his sore lies, how can he apply the remedy to it? Therefore the Lord bids the people of Judah to 'break up their fallow ground, and so not among thorns,' Jer. iv. 3. to carry down the plow to the root of their corruptions, which is the sin of our nature. It was the ruin of the stony ground, that there was no depth of the earth. And it is the ruin of many who are convinced, that

they never get a true sight of their own sinful nature ; and thus their case turns to be like that of a boil, not sufficiently lanced, it is scurfed over a while, but never healed.

2. When the sinner is convinced of his absolute need of Christ, and of all his salvation, John xvi. 8. It is for this end that the Spirit works this work on the elect. Sinners will not come to Christ as long as they can find any other way ; and therefore the Spirit hunts the elect out of all their starting holes, that finding no rest for the soles of their feet, they may get into the ark.

Therefore they must be convinced, that they cannot want him ; that they are utterly undone, if they get not an interest in him. And they must see their need of his sanctifying Spirit, as well as his justifying blood ; that they must be saved by him from sin, as well as from wrath. They must see their utter inability to take away their guilt by all their mourning, reformation, &c. and that they can as little mortify a lust as take away guilt.

*Inf.* 1. How hopeless is the case of many that have never yet been awakened by the Spirit of conviction ! The forerunners of the effectual call are not yet come unto you.

2. What a madness is it to work against and stave off convictions, or to murder them when they have once entered ! These sinners against their own souls, wrestle against their own salvation.

SECONDLY, The work of the Spirit in effectual calling, is an illumination of the soul from Mount Zion. It is the enlightening in the knowledge of Christ, Acts xxvi. 18. It is the finding of the pearl spoken of, Matth. xiii. 45, 46. It is the discovery of the Physician to the soul anxious for spiritual life and health. And this is a refreshing illumination, like the appearance of the rising sun after a long black and dark night, Hos. vi. 3. And here let us consider the matter, the effect, the means, and the measure, of this illumination.

*First,* The matter of this illumination is twofold.

1. Christ's ability to save. The man is made to see that Christ is able to save him, and that however desperate his condition be, he can cure him, Heb. vii. 25. 'He is able also to save them unto the uttermost that come unto God through him.' The eyes that were held before that they could not perceive him, discover now his glorious suitable-



ness to their case. They see him in the glory of his person and natures, and his offices; a fulness in him, of merit for their justification, and of Spirit for their sanctification.

2. His willingness to save. The man is made to see that Christ is willing to save him, John vi. 37. 'Him that cometh to me, (says the Lord Jesus), I will in nowise cast out.' He sees that there is hope in Israel concerning his salvation in particular; that however his sins be many and great, yet he is not excluded from the benefit of the indemnity proclaimed and offered in the gospel. He discovers the saviour stretching out his arms to embrace him, and calling him to partake of the benefits of his purchase.

*Secondly*, The effect of this illumination is hope. As the wise merchant hoping to be owner of the pearl, sets himself to it, Matth. xiii. 46. The soul then begins to lift up its head, and says, 'Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?' Joel. ii. 14.; and with Jonah in the whale's belly, 'Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple,' Jonah ii. 4. And this is a blessed anchor of the soul that is yet in the depths, and has not got ashore, and keeps it from despondency.

*Thirdly*, The means by which it is wrought. That is the glorious gospel in the hand of the Spirit, Acts xxvi. 17, 18. For Christ is the great subject of it, Eph. iii. 8. The law discovers the disease, and the gospel the physician. The one is effected by the thunder of a broken law, and the other by the still small voice of the gospel. And herewith begins the healing of the wounded soul.

*Fourthly*, The measure of it. The clearer this light be, it is so much the better. The more fully one be persuaded of Christ's ability and willingness to save, the more quick and thorough will his deliverance from all his fears be. But it is more or less, and not of one degree, in all. But so much of it is necessary as may make the soul venture itself on Christ, Mark ix. 24. And even this is very acceptable in the sight of the Lord, as the fruit of his own Spirit, Cant. vi. 10.

**SECONDLY**, The second work of the Spirit in effectual calling is on the will of the sinner. This faculty of the soul needs also a saving work of the Spirit thereon, being fearfully depraved in the state of nature, Rom. viii. 7. Effectual calling is the Lord's opening of the heart, as Lydia's; as the

call of the gospel is, to open to him, Rev. iii. 20. There is a twofold door opened in effectual calling. (1) The outer door of the understanding. That is opened by the twofold illumination spoken of before. And that door may at least be half-opened, as blown up by a law-storm of conviction, and yet the soul be not effectually called. (2.) The inner door of the will; and when that is opened, the work is done, Christ and the sinner meet. It is the great work. Now, the Spirit's work on the will is;

The renewing of it, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. The Spirit of the Lord takes away the old obstinate will of the sinner, which was an iron sinew in his neck, that would never bow to him; and gives him a new will, renewing him in the Spirit of his mind. Sin gave all the faculties of the soul a wrong set, particularly the will, which was originally bent in conformity to the will of God; but in the state of nature is bent the quite contrary way, Rom. viii. 7. The Spirit of the Lord in effectual calling brings it back in some measure to its primitive constitution.

This renovation does not change the soul in its substance but in the qualities thereof. It is the endowing of the will with new qualities, removing and breaking the power of the old ones, Eph. iv. 23, 24. planting in it new dispositions and inclinations. These are chiefly two:

1. Flexibleness or pliability to good, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.' The stony heart is inflexible; it will break but not bow. But grace makes it a heart of flesh, that will bow according to the will of God. It powerfully melts it down, like wax before the fire; and makes it capable of impressions of holiness, Acts ix. 6, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' content to be made holy, to be made clean, to come into the Physician's hand; willing to part with sin. The natural contumacy, wilfulness, and refractoriness, is carried off; the bullock unaccustomed to the yoke is tamed, and is taught to stand and receive it.

2. A proneness and bent of the will to good, Jer. xxxi. 18. The natural aversion is conquered, and the will that bended to the wrong side, by a powerful touch of the hand of the sanctifying Spirit, gets a set the contrary way, and is bowed or inclined to the will of God. This David prays for, for himself, Psal. cxix. 36. 'Incline my heart unto thy

testimonies ;' and the apostle, for the Thessalonians, 2 Epist. iii. 5. 'The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.' The Holy Ghost working like fire, makes the iron heart first bowable, and then gives it the bow, Psal. cx. 3. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.'

If any ask, how this is done ? let them take their answer from Eccl. xi. 5. 'Thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all, John iii. 8. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth.' The works of God in nature are often beyond our reach to account for the way of them, and no wonder his work of grace is so. The effect is felt, the change is visible ; but how the Spirit worketh it, who can distinctly trace that ? This we are sure of, it is done in a way agreeable to the rational nature ; there is no force or compulsion in the case ; but he that made the heart, makes it willing, and sweetly, yet powerfully conquers it, Psal. cx. 3.

Thus ye have heard that the work of the Spirit is twofold on the elect soul in effectual calling. It remains that,

*Lastly*, I shew you the blessed effect and happy issue of this twofold work of the Spirit on the elect soul. It is, that the sinner is persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered in the gospel. And thus the call is effectual. Here we may consider,

1. The effectual closing with the call. That is the sinner's embracing of Christ by faith, John i. 12. The call of the gospel comes to poor sinners, saying, as Jer. iii. 22. 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings ; and when it is effectual, the soul echoes back to the call, 'Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.' The heart is won to Christ, the sinner is conquered, says Amen to the covenant, and gives its consent to Christ, to take him in the offer of the gospel. It comes out of itself, renounces its own wisdom, and takes Christ for a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, for all, and instead of all. This is the great design of the call ; and whatever length one come, he never answers the call, till he come this length. Though people may come the length of mourning for sin, and reformation of life in duties, if they do not embrace Christ in the gospel-offer, they stick in the place of breaking forth.



2. The warrant the sinner has to embrace Christ. That is the gospel-offer, Prov. viii. 4. 'Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men.' It would be presumption indeed for guilty creatures to embrace Christ, if he were not offered unto them. That is a match which is so high above us, that we could have no hopes of it, unless it were offered to us. But we are bidden to this marriage, Matth. xxii. 4. We are commanded to believe on him, John iii. 23. and that on our highest peril, Mark xvi. 16. 'He that believeth not, shall be damned.' And do what we will, we cannot please God, if we do not that, Heb. xi. 6. 'For without faith it is impossible to please him:' for that is what the Lord mainly requires of us, John vi. 29. 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'

4. How the elect soul is effectually determined to it. The Spirit of the Lord persuades him to it, John vi. 45. Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.' The soul has a bosom-counsellor, that leaves it not till it be won over to give consent to the happy match. The sinner may stand long in suspense, doubting whether to embrace the call or not, and Satan, with the corrupt heart, will muster up all the objections they can against it. But the Spirit of the Lord clears all their objections to the soul, so far as they cannot get them sustained, and presses and urges the sinner unanswerably to comply.

And this the Spirit does by the twofold illumination spoken of before. Upon the one hand, the sinner is pressed with his lost and undone state. He sees that he is undone for ever, if he does not comply. On the other, he is pressed with the sight of Christ's ability and willingness to save, and the prospect of perfect happiness upon his compliance. So that he sees all the reason in the world for answering the call.

This shews that the Spirit acts in the conversion of a soul in a way suitable to the rational nature. What stronger arguments are possible than what are here made use of? and how can they fail to determine when the Spirit of the Lord, by his gracious work, sets them home on the soul? Can there be any thing more powerful to determine the slayer to run, than to see the avenger of blood hard behind him,

and the city of refuge hard before him? And so it is in this case.

*Lastly*, How the sinner is helped to comply with the call. The Spirit of the Lord enables him, Eph. i. 19, 20. This is absolutely necessary, John vi. 44. 'No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me draw him.' In vain will we call the lame man to run for his life, for, alas! he cannot do it; or the dead to arise, for they cannot move. But the Lord with the call sends forth a power enabling them to answer it, as in the case of Lazarus, Phil. ii. 13. 'For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' The soul gets life from the Spirit of life, feet to run to Christ, and hands to receive him, even the faith that is of the operation of God. And so the work is completed.

This is done by the renewing of the will in a special manner. The soul being made pliable, actually complies; and having got the new disposition, acts accordingly, embracing and uniting with Jesus Christ.

I proceed now to the application of this subject.

USE I. Of information. This lets us see,

1. The happiness of those that are effectually called; they are partakers of Christ's salvation. He and his redemption are theirs. Their particular privileges will afterwards occur. In the general,

(1.) Whatever they meet with in the world, it shall turn to their good, Rom. viii. 28. Their crosses shall not be curses, but their curses be turned into blessings. The teeth-winds they meet with shall blow them towards their harbour, and every stone cast at them shall be turned into a precious stone. They shall be gainers by all, and losers by nothing at length. For that eternal purpose by which they are called, has ordered all things for their good.

(2.) They shall surely be safe for ever: 'For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,' Rom. xi. 29.

They are brought out from among the perishing multitude, and they shall never fall back again. Of the society they are called into, none can be lost. God will perfect the work which he has begun; and they that are brought upon this first step of the ladder, shall go from one step to another, till they come into the hill of God.

2. The misery of those who are not effectually called.

They are not partakers of Christ's redemption. We all have the external call of the gospel: but, alas! how few of the called do come in upon the call? O, Sirs, see how ye entertain the gospel-call, your all depends on it for salvation or damnation. While ye do not comply with it, ye are in a lost state, a state of sin and wrath; yea, if he do not comply with it, it will be worse for you than if he had never heard the gospel-call, Prov. i. 24. I shall here, for the conviction of sinners, lay down some evidences of the call of the gospel's not being effectual to them.

(1.) They that never felt a divine power coming alongst with the word into their hearts, are not effectually called, Isa. liii. 1. Psal. cx. 3. Think on this, ye that have still sat unmoved under the dropping of the gospel, into whose ears the word comes; but it never sinks into your hearts, I may say. Ye have never heard the Lord's voice, and therefore are still in your sin.

(2.) They that never had any abiding impression made by the word on their spirits. Many are like the stony ground on whom the word makes some impression, while they hear it or read it, but presently it goes away, Matth. xiii. 6. They are like the sieve in the water, full, but immediately lose all again. Be sure, if ever the Spirit of God deal effectually with you, he will make an impression on you that will stick. Ye will carry it home with you, and it will hang about you, till it make you change your way and course, and make you new creatures.

(3.) They that are still with the world lying in wickedness; the old men and women they were before, no change, no reformation with them, by all the calls of the gospel, sounding in their ears, 1 John v. 19. If ever ye comply with the call, ye will come away, and leave that way and that society. Such are all profane persons, grossly ignorant of the truths of God, prayerless persons, and generally all that are not truly godly. O how easily may most be known to be of the world! Are there not many whose speech bewrays them? they speak the language of the world, they know not that of Canaan. They keep the way of the world; they are conformed to it, in sinful scandalous practices. They drive worldly designs as the main design they have in hand. The constant language of their practice is, 'Who will shew



us any good,' any worldly or temporal good? They go with ease the way of the multitude.

(4.) They that have never been under convictions of their sinful and lost state. This is the first work of the Spirit in effectual calling. What think ye of yourselves then, who have lived at ease all your days, whose rest has never been disturbed with the thoughts of what shall become of your immortal souls at death? Luke xi. 21. Have ye never seen yourselves lost and undone under the wrath of God? If so, it is an evidence, that it lies upon you still. If ye have never seen yourselves children of the devil, it is a sure token that ye are not yet the children of God.

(5.) Those whose convictions have never gone deep enough, Matth. xiii. 6. Many have got the sluggard's awakening, who have been disturbed in their spiritual sleep, but never thoroughly awakened, and therefore they have just fallen asleep again. They have been frightened under the guilt of gross sins, but never saw the evil of vain thoughts, idle words, &c. like children that are very easy playing with the dust, as long as it gets not into their eyes. If they have got a frightful sight of their actual sins, yet they never had the sin of their nature spread out before them. They have not been convinced of their need of Christ's Spirit for their sanctification, as well as of his blood for their justification.

(6.) Those who have stifled their convictions, warred against an awakened conscience, and come off victorious. Many take ways and means to quench the Spirit, which prevail to their own ruin; a plain evidence that they are strangers to the efficacious irresistible operations of the Spirit in effectual calling. Some get their convictions laid by delays and off-puts, as Felix did, Acts xxiv. 25. Some for that end fill their heads and hands with business, like Cain building cities. Some with carnal mirth divert them, or, by rushing on to more sin over the belly of their consciences, do choke them, till they become as seared with a hot iron. O horrid cruelty against the soul! to refuse to be healed!

(7.) Those who have never had any special illumination in the knowledge of Christ. It is certain, that hypocrites may be enlightened both in the knowledge of the law and of the gospel, Heb. vi. 4; but there is a saving illumination in effectual calling that is peculiar to the so called, John iv. 10. Psal. ix. 10. In that work there is such a discovery made of

Christ in his ability and willingness to save, as shews him to be so suitable to the sinner's case, so transcendently excellent, as that the soul is determined to embrace him for all, Matth. xiii. 45, 46. It sinks the value of all created things, and makes sinful lusts to appear as husks for swine, in comparison of the bread of life.

(8.) Those who, whatever light they have got, yet there has been no heat with it, to melt down the heart and will into a pliability to the will of God, and the call of the gospel, Job xxiv. 13. Many come a great length in light, by the common operations of the Spirit, from whom the stony heart is never taken away, nor the power of it broken. Such was the case of Balaam, in whom the heart enmity against God and holiness is still rampant, as appears from the history of him. Such also was the case of those mentioned, Heb. vi. 4. &c. The outer door is broken up by the force of a law-storm, and some common touches of the Spirit on their minds; but the inner door remains still shut. The outworks are taken, but the fort of the heart remains impregnable. Some one lust or other still has the throne in the heart.

(9.) *Lastly*, Those whose exercises have never issued in a kindly closing with Christ in the gospel-offer. O! it is lamentable to think how many a good work that seems once fairly begun is miserably marred. Some are still kept wavering and undetermined, halting betwixt God and Baal, light pressing them forward, love to their lusts drawing them back, so that their time is like to go ere they come to a resolution what to do. Some, instead of closing with Christ, close with duties; but never come out of themselves to Christ, but like the spider, entangled in her own web, perish. But true believers 'rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,' Phil. iii. 3. Some close with Christ for justification, but never mind or see a need to close with him for sanctification.

USE II. Of exhortation. Come away from the world lying in wickedness, unto Jesus Christ, and so comply with the gospel-call. Come away, sinners, unto him. For motives,

1. Consider what a society ye are called to come out of. See their character, Eph. ii. 12. Those that are 'without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.' We are all natives of that

society indeed ; but it is a Godless, Christless society, which we have need to leave, and that timeously.

(1.) It is a sinful society, a corrupt, unclean one, where there is nothing pure, Tit. i. 15. Better lie in a kennel with dogs, or in a hog-stye with swine, than with the world in wickedness. Their souls are like Job's body, boils and sores all over, that they have not a free finger to scrape themselves withal. The society of the unconverted are defiled in all their faculties, and so they can do nothing that is good and acceptable in God's sight. Their thoughts are polluted with vanity or vileness, their words are abominable, for their throat is like an open sepulchre ; their actions, their very civil actions, are sinful, Prov. xxi. 4. ; and their religious ones are so too, Prov. xv. 8.

(2.) It is a most miserable society, Rev. iii. 17. O the wretched state of the unconverted world ! what tongue can tell their misery, who are without Christ, and without God in the world. They are the butt of God's indignation, and set for a mark to the arrows of his wrath, Psal. vii. 12, 13. They are those that are under God's curse ; their state is a prison, out of which those that die in it are carried to the prison of hell : and there is no more difference betwixt them and the damned, than betwixt a dry faggot lying before the fire ready to be cast in, and the faggot that is in it already. A black cloud of wrath hangs over their heads at all times, ready to break upon them, John iii. 36.

How can it be otherwise, since it is a society which Satan is the head of. 2 Cor. iv. 4. ruled and governed by him, and with whom those that die in it must lodge for ever ?

Now, sinners, have ye not been long enough there already ? May I not say, as Deut. i. 6. ' Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount.' O come away from Lebanon ! Cant. iv. 8. Leave the world of the ungodly, that are to be swept away with the flood of wrath, and come into the ark. Turn your back on that Sodom, which is to be overthrown in its own filthiness ; haste and flee for your life ; there is a Zoar to flee into, where ye may be safe.

2. Consider what a society ye are called to. This calling is a high calling, Phil. iii. 14. It is a holy and happy society. All the saints, the excellent ones of the earth, are of it, the glorified saints, the holy angels, and God in Christ is the



head of it, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. O refuse not that high calling!

If ye will come away, ye shall enjoy the privileges of this society as members thereof, Eph. ii. 19. Ye shall be inheritors of glory, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ : not only saved from wrath, but made happy here in the favour of God, and completely blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

3. *Lastly*, Consider who calleth you. It is the voice of a man that ye hear, but the word of the call is the Lord's own word : and therefore I say, ' See that ye refuse not him that speaketh,' Heb. xii. 25. Our Lord Jesus has got the grant of the kingdom from the Father ; and he minds to raise it up on the ruins of Satan's kingdom. And therefore he comes to the world lying in wickedness, to call out from among them whom he may make partakers of his glory. And therefore I say to you, ' Arise, for the Master calleth you.' And since it is so, it is evident,

(1.) Ye may come ; there is an open door for you, none of you all are excluded, Isa. lv. 1. The fallen angels have not that privilege, and therefore they grudge ye should have it ; and they will do what they can to keep you from the benefit of it.

(2.) Ye shall not be rejected, nor get the door cast in your teeth, John vi. 37. Your being called ensures your welcome. Let not unbelief suggest such jealousies, as that it is needless to come now, for ye will not be accepted ; for the market of free grace is not yet over, and as long as the call is given you, ye may be sure of welcome. Indeed the day will come, that Christ will cease to call you ; and then it will be needless to think of coming : but O come while the door is open ! ' Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us ; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are,' Luke xiii. 24, 25.

(3.) *Lastly*, If ye do not come, it is upon your peril, the peril of the Mediator's vengeance. Does he call you, and will ye not come ? Nay, you must come under the pain of the King's highest displeasure, Mat. xxii. 7.

As for you that are called, see that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, being holy in all manner of life and conversation.

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OF THE BENEFITS OF EFFECTUAL CALLING.

ROM. viii. 30.—*Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

**I**N this and the preceding verse is the golden chain of salvation, consisting of five links. The first two lie out of the sinner's view, till they be brought to light by means of the third. The first is God's foreknowledge, or eternal free-love and favour to some of mankind, laid on them from everlasting. The second is the predestination of these, electing them to everlasting life, and the means leading thereto. The third is the calling of the predestinated, calling them effectually, which is done in time, of which we have spoke before: There are other two that hang upon this. The fourth is the justification of the called which may imply the whole of the relative change made upon them, both their justification and adoption; for it is evident from ver. 29. that the apostle has respect to adoption in this chain. The fifth is the glorifying of the justified, which may import the whole of the real change made on the elect, namely, the sanctifying of them here, and glorifying of them hereafter. For what is grace but glory in the bud, and glory but grace brought to perfection? and therefore believers, 'with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,' 2 Cor. iii. 18. Thus effectual calling, as it rises from eternal love, so it makes the soul happy here and hereafter.

The text affords this doctrine, viz.

DOCT. 'They that are effectually called do thereby partake of great and glorious benefits and privileges, both in this life and the life to come.'

Here I shall briefly shew,

I. What are those benefits which they who are effectually called partake of in this life.

II. The benefits they partake of in the life to come.

## III. Apply.

I. I shall shew what are those benefits which they that are effectually called partake of in this life.

*First*, There are three leading benefits which they partake of here.

1. They are all justified. So says the text. As soon as ever the soul answers the call of the gospel, and comes to Christ, the man is brought out of a state of condemnation, and gets his absolution, Rom. viii. 1. He lives not a moment longer under the black cloud of the curse, but is translated into another climate, where he lives under the sunshine of the blessing. His sins are all pardoned, and he is accepted as a righteous man. He is judged, and he gets the white stone, Rev. ii. 17. The law and justice have no more to demand of him; the cords of guilt are loosed and thrown away, and he is clothed with a perfect righteousness.

2. They are all adopted children of God, Eph. i. 5. They get not only the white stone, but the new name, the name of sons and daughters to God. They are brought out of the devil's family, and made members of the household of faith; not servants only, but sons. From the moment they answer the call, new blood runs in their veins; they are of the blood-royal of heaven; Christ's Father is their Father, he is their elder brother; and the Spirit of his son dwells in them, teaching them to cry, Abba, Father. They are of the same household with the excellent of the earth: All ye are brethren; nay, with the saints and angels in heaven; for though the one dwell above, and the other below, they are all but one family, Eph. iii. 15.

3. They are all sanctified, 1 Cor. i. 30. 1 Thess. iv. 7. It is a holy calling, 2 Tim, i. 9. The author of it is holy, the means are holy, and the end and effect of it must needs be holy. As soon as the sinner answers the call, the Spirit of sanctification goes on with the begun work in him, breaks the reigning power of sin, gives it a deadly blow, so that it shall never recover, but languish on, till it quite die out. He adorns him with all saving graces, conforming the sinner to the image of Christ, John i. 16; so that he begins to lead a new life, living to the Lord and his service. The call brings him, like Lazarus, out of the congregation of the dead, and then the remainder of his life is spent in putting off the



grave-cloths of sin, and acting from a principle of spiritual life.

*Secondly*, There are other benefits which accompany or flow from these. For these come not alone, but each of them is the opening of a treasure to the called, the striking up of a fountain, that runs out in many streams, Eph. i. 3. Some of these are mentioned in that question, ‘What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?’ *Ans.*—‘Assurance of God’s love, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.’ But who can reckon up all these benefits? For ‘all things are theirs; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs,’ 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. I shall only at present single out the following.

1. Reconciliation with God, Rom. v. 1. ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.’ When the sinner is effectually called, the real enmity is taken away, and the legal enmity is removed by justification. God and the sinner become friends, and are firmly so in a covenant of peace, having common friends and enemies. Sin being removed and pardoned, the peace follows of course. The war is ended; for the treaty of peace proposed by the ambassadors of peace is complied with. But of this I spoke when treating of Christ’s priestly office.

2. Access to God, as children to a Father, Eph. iii. 12. as one friend to another. The war being ended, and peace concluded, the communication betwixt heaven and earth is opened. They may export thither all their wants, petitions, and requests, being sure that they will be taken off their hands; and import supplies of all kinds necessary, to make them happy, light, life, strength, &c.

3. Freedom from the slavery of sin and Satan, John viii. 32. They that are sanctified by the Spirit, are loosed from the Egyptian bondage, and made the Lord’s free-men. Though Satan and sin molest them, and put them hard to it, they shall never get them back again into their former house of bondage. But they shall, like a dog snarling at the horses heels, be bruised under their feet at length, Rom. vi. 20. And the soul shall be more than conqueror.

4. *Lastly*, A right to eternal life, Rom. viii. 17. Acts xx.

32. They may claim it in their head Christ, and their title is good and sure in him; for it is a heavenly calling, whereby they are called to the eternal inheritance. And therefore says the apostle, 2 Cor. v. 1. 'We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

II. I shall shew what benefits they that are effectually called partake of in the life to come. The advantages of effectual calling are great in this life, but they do not stop there. when a man must leave all temporal benefits, which he enjoys any manner of way here in this world, he will enter to the full enjoyment of the benefits coming by his answering the gospel-call. These are comprehended in one word, glorification, which will fall in afterwards to be treated of. In a word, at death the converted soul is received into heaven; at the last day his body will be gloriously raised, and both soul and body made perfectly happy for ever, 2 Thess. ii. 14.

I come now to make some practical improvement of this subject.

USE I. Of information. This doctrine lets us see,

1. That the gospel is the best news that ever was heard in the world, and the most excellent offer that ever was made to poor sinners, Eph. iii. 8. There are many to court the soul; Satan makes his offers, the world its offers, and sin has its offers too. But all that they offer will not tell far, it perishes in the using, at most it cannot reach beyond this life. But Christ's offer in the gospel is of the best of things here, and the best of all hereafter, that we may enter to the enjoyment of, when nothing remains but the bitter dregs of the offers of sin, Satan, and the world.

2. God deals very liberally and kindly with his people that answer his call. He does not put an empty spoon in their mouths, he sets them not down to bare commons; they get much in hand, and yet far more in hope, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. Their present possessions are far more valuable than crowns and sceptres in the world; but what they have a title to, is what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive. And then all is firm and sure; they can never be shaken out of their privileges, Rom. xi. 29. Heb. xii. 28.

3. Whatever men lose by complying with and following

the gospel-call, they are gainers, Phil. iii. 8. He was a wise merchant that sold all to buy the pearl of great price. They are wise indeed that are wise for their souls; and they are so that come to Christ on his call; while all the neglectors of the great salvation, gain what they will otherwise, do lose a talent while they gain a mite, losing their own souls, which loss can never be made up.

USE II. Of exhortation.

*First*, To unconverted sinners. O comply with the gospel-call at length, and come away to Christ. I offer a few motives to press the exhortation.

*Mot. 1.* While ye do not come away upon the call, ye have no part or lot in these benefits. If ye presume to apply them to yourselves, God's word knocks off your fingers from them, for they are the peculiar privilege of those that are effectually called. And,

1. Ye are not justified, the sentence of condemnation is standing in force against you, Gal. iii. 10. John iii. ult. And as sure as God's word cannot fail, it will be executed, if ye come not in in time. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse; all that thou dost is sin. But not one of all thy sins is pardoned; they are all wreathed about thy neck, and thou hast them all to reckon for. And thou hast not a cautioner to go between justice and thee; the burden must lie on thy own back.

2. Ye are none of God's children, but of the devil's, John viii. 44. Ye are still of the family ye were born of. A sad family, against which God will have war for ever. Ye can have no access to God, nor communion with him, nor may any of the privileges of the children of God be claimed by you. Your inheritance is suitable to the family ye are of, namely, that ye are children of wrath, and heirs of hell.

3. Ye are not sanctified. There is no sanctification without the Spirit of Christ dwelling in you; ye have not Christ's Spirit, for ye are none of his. A form of godliness ye may have, but the power of it ye are strangers to. Ye are Satan's drudges and sin's slaves, though all are not employed in alike coarse work by the master of that family, Eph. ii. 2, 3.

*Mot. 2.* If ye will come to Christ on his call, ye shall partake of all these benefits. If your sins were never so great



and many, they shall be pardoned, Isa. lv. 7. Ye shall be the children of God through Jesus Christ, John i. 12. Ye shall be made holy, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Come in under the covert of his blood, and then neither law nor justice shall reach you. Match with the Son of God, and ye shall be of his Father's family. Answer his call, and he will break the yoke from off your necks, and make you free.

O, Sirs, do not ye need these benefits? How will ye live without them? are ye able to bear the weight of unpardoned guilt? How will ye die without them? What will it be to die in an unpardoned state, strangers to the family of heaven, and still in your sins? May not these glorious privileges prevail with you? Do ye think nothing of the white stone and new name, which ye may get by coming to Christ? Seemeth it a light thing to you to be adopted into the family of the King of heaven, and to have his image drawn on you? Think with yourselves how it will aggravate your condemnation, that Christ and all his salvation was in your offer, and ye would have none of him, Heb. ii. 3.

*Secondly*, To converted sinners that have answered the call.

1. Labour to know your great privileges for time and eternity, 2 Pet. i. 10. O! it is a sad matter that the people of God should have so little knowledge of their state. This would be a notable means to promote sanctification, and tenderness in heart and life.

2. Be thankful for these privileges. Bless God for Christ and the gospel. O bless him for his holy and powerful Spirit. Admire and adore his rich grace, bestowed on worthless worms through Christ, 1 John iii. 1.

3. *Lastly*, Walk worthy of the vocation, and suitable to the privileges of it, that is, humbly, holily, heavenly, contentedly, patiently, and cheerfully, in hopes of the glory that is to be revealed.

## OF JUSTIFICATION.

ROMANS iii. 24.—*Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

**T**HE first of those benefits which the called do partake of is justification, which is the great relative change made upon them, bringing them out of the state of condemnation, wherein they are born, and live till they come to Christ. In the text we have,

1. The persons justified, sinners, viz. believing in Christ. It is the justification of a sinner that the apostle speaks of, as is implied in the connection, ver. 23, 24. ‘For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: *being justified freely by his grace*; but believing, ver. 26.—the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.’

2. The party justifying, God the judge of all, his grace. It is God’s act to justify a sinner.

3. The manner and moving cause, *freely by his grace*. It is done freely, without any thing of ours done by us to procure or merit it; and it flows from God’s grace or free favour to undeserving and ill deserving creatures.

4. The material and meritorious cause, *the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*. He has paid the price and ransom whereby the sinner is set free.

The text affords this great and important doctrinal note, viz.

DOCT. ‘The justification of a sinner before God is of free grace, through the satisfaction of Christ.’

In discoursing from this subject I shall shew,

I. What it is to justify a sinner, in general, in the scriptural sense.

II. What are the parts of justification.

III. The cause of our justification.

IV. Apply the subject.

I. I shall shew what it is to justify a sinner, in general, in the scripture-sense. Justification and sanctification are indeed inseparable. In vain do they pretend to be justified who are not sanctified; and in vain do they fear they are not justified, who are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

But yet they are distinct benefits, not to be confounded, nor taken for one and the same.

Justification is not the making of a person just and righteous, by infusing of grace or holiness unto him. But it is a discharging him from guilt, and declaring or pronouncing him righteous. So it is a law-term taken from courts of judicature, wherein a person is accused, tried, and after trial absolved. Thus the scripture opposeth it to accusation and condemnation, Rom. viii. 33, 34. 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,' Deut. xxv. 1. 'They shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.' And so it is declared to be a sin to justify the wicked, Prov. xvii. 15. not to make them righteous, but to pronounce them righteous. Hence it follows, that,

1. Justification is not a real change of the sinner's nature, but a relative change of his state. The change of the sinner's nature, from sin to holiness, is inseparably annexed to it: but it is only the bringing him out of the state of condemnation, and setting him beyond the reach of the law, as a righteous person, which is an unspeakable benefit.

2. Justification is an act done and passed in an instant in the court of heaven, as soon as the sinner believes in Christ; and not a work carried on by degrees. For if a sinner be not perfectly justified, he is not justified at all. If a man were accused of ten capital crimes, if one of them be fixed upon him, he is condemned, and must die. And hence also, though one may be more sanctified than another, yet no believer is in the sight of God more justified than another, since the state of justification is not capable of degrees.

II. I proceed to shew what are the parts of justification.

These are two, the pardoning of sin, and accepting of the sinner's person as righteous. This double benefit is conferred on the sinner in justification. That we may the more clearly take up this matter, we must view the process of a sinner's justification. And here,

*First*, God himself sits Judge in this process, Psal. ix. 4. 'Thou sittest in the throne judging right.' He gave the law; and as he is the Lawgiver, so he is the Judge of all the earth. Men may justify themselves, Luke x. 29. and others



may justify them: but what does it avail, if God do not justify them? for only he has the authority and power to do it, Rom. viii. 33. 'It is God that justifieth.' Many a man looking overly into his own state and case, passes a very favourable sentence on himself, and his way may be so blameless before the world, that others must judge him a righteous man too; but the judgment of God comes after, and reverses all. And he only can justify authoritatively and irreversibly. For.

1. He only is the Lawgiver, and he only has power to save or to destroy, and therefore the judgment must be left to him, Jam. iv. 12. The case concerns his honour and law, and must be tried at his tribunal; and whoever takes it in hand, he will call it to his own bar.

2. To him the debt is owing, and therefore he only can give the discharge. Against him the crime is committed, and he only can pardon it. Accept us as righteous who will, if he do it not, who gave the law of righteousness, it is nothing, Mark ii. 7.

*Secondly*, The sinner is cited to answer before God's judgment-seat, by the messengers of God, the ministers of the gospel, Mal. iii. 1. Every sermon an unconverted sinner hears, is a summons put in his hand to answer for his living in a state and course of sin. He is told he has broken God's law, and he must go to God and see what he will answer, and what course he will take with his debt. But, alas! for the most part, sinners are so secure, that they sit the summons, slight it, and will not appear.

But that is not all. Some keep themselves out of the messengers way; either they will not come at all, or very seldom to the public assemblies where the summons is given, Heb. x. 25. But the leaving of the summons there will hold in law before him that sends them, and the dust of the messengers feet will be sufficient witness to the execution, Matt. x. 14. Some never read the summons, they never once seriously consider or apply to themselves the word preached. They hear it as if they heard it not, it never sinks into their hearts. Others tear the summons in pieces; their hearts, like Ahab in the case of Micaiah, rise against the word and the bearer of it, and they hate both, as speaking no good of them. Some affront the messengers, and sometimes lay violent hands on them, Matth. xxii. 6. And thus some sit the

summons all their days, and never appear till death brings them under his black rod, before the tribunal in another world, where there is no access to justification or pardon. But God suffers none of his elect to do so always.

*Thirdly*, The Lord the Judge sends out other messengers, and they apprehend the sinner, lay hands on him to carry him, whether he will or not, before the judgment-seat, and oblige him to abide his trial. And these are two, the Spirit of bondage, and an awakened conscience, John xvi. 8, 9. Prov. xx. 27. These will catch the man, and hunt him till they find him out, when they have got their order, Jer. ii. 27. They apprehended Paul when going to Damascus, and left him not till he appeared, and submitted himself.

But it is not always so. Some that are apprehended get out of the messengers hands, and make their escape unhappily. When they are caught, they are unruly prisoners, they struggle and wrestle, and strive against the Spirit, and their own consciences, Acts vii. 51. they go no farther with them than they are dragged. They get the mastery at length over their conscience, break its bonds, and stifle its convictions, and so grieve and quench the Spirit, that they get away to their own ruin; like Cain, Saul, Felix, &c. But none of God's elect ever get away for altogether.

*Fourthly*, Then the elect soul is infallibly sisted at length before the judgment-seat. The Spirit of bondage and the awakened conscience apprehend him afresh, and bring their prisoner in chains of guilt unto the bar trembling, and he can escape the trial no longer, before a holy God, Acts xvi. 29, 30. Then what fear, sorrow and anxiety, seize the prisoner's soul, while he sees a just Judge on the throne, a strict and severe law laid before him, and he has a guilty conscience within! And he must undergo a trial for his life, not the life of the body only, but of soul and body for evermore. These things may seem idle tales to some; but if ye have not experienced the reality of them, ye shall do it, or dreadful shall the judgment after death be to you.

*Fifthly*, Then the indictment, or criminal libel, is read in the ears of the trembling sinner before the Judge, and that by the law, which manages the accusation so as the pannel shall stand speechless, Rom. iii. 10,—19. Every one of the ten commands accuse him of innumerable evils and transgressions. His omissions and commissions are laid in broad-

band before him; his sins of heart, lip, and life, and the sin of his nature, are all charged upon him, and that with their several aggravations. And sentence is demanded against the pannel, according to justice, and agreeable to the law, Gal. iii. 10. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.'

*Sixthly*, Then the sinner must plead guilty or not, to the indictment. Indeed, if he were innocent, he might plead not guilty, deny the libel, and thereupon he would be justified. But, alas! this plea is not for us poor sinners. For, (1.) It is utterly false, Rom. iii. 10. Eccl. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 2. And, (2.) Falsehood can never bear out before God's judgment-seat. There is no want of evidence to prove all. Conscience within is as a thousand witnesses, and will testify against the sinner. The Judge is omniscient, and there is no concealing of our crimes from him. Therefore this plea will not do, Rom. iii. 20. The sinner then must needs plead guilty, confess the libel, and every article of it, acknowledge the debt, and every article of it, though he is utterly unable to pay, Rom. iii. 19.

*Seventhly*, The sinner being convicted by his own confession as guilty, is put to it to plead, What he has to say why the sentence of death eternal should not pass against him, according to law and justice, and why he should not be hauled from the judgment-seat to execution. Here, what shall he plead at this terrible nick of time, where his state for eternity is just upon the turning point? Shall he plead mercy for mere mercy's sake, casting him down at the Judge's feet? Justice interposes betwixt mercy and the sinner, and pleads that the Judge of all the earth must do right, that he cannot prostitute his honour for the safety of rebels, but must magnify the law, and make it honourable. The truth of God interposes, and says, the word is already gone out of the Judge's mouth, and must be accomplished, That without shedding of blood there is no remission. Whither shall the sinner turn now? Can the saints help? No; they cannot spare any of their oil. Can angels do nothing? No; their united stock would not be sufficient to clear the debt. The sinner then must die the death, and sink under his own burden, if help come not from another quarter. So,

*Eighthly*, The formerly despised Mediator, the great Advocate at this court, who takes the desperate causes of sinners



in hand, and expedites them, offers himself now, in this extremity, to the sinner, with his perfect righteousness, and all his salvation. The sinner embraces him with heart and goodwill, enters into the covenant, by faith lays hold on him, renounces all other claims, and betakes himself to his alone merits and suretyship. Now is the sinner united to Christ, and by virtue of that union has communion with him, particularly in his righteousness, and so stands before God in the white raiment of the Mediator's righteousness. Now has the sinner a plea that will infallibly bring him off.

He pleads, he is guilty indeed; yet he must not die, for Christ has died for him. The debt was a just debt; but the Cautioner has paid it, and therefore he craves up his discharge. The law's demands were just; but they are all answered already, both as to doing and suffering. The soul is now married to Christ; and therefore, if the law or justice want any thing, they must seek it of the Husband, and not of her, seeing the soul is thereby put under covert. Therefore the convicted believing sinner gets in under the covert of the Mediator's blood, which stands open in that court; and there stands and pleads against all that law or justice can demand, that it must not die, but be graciously acquitted.

*Lastly,* Hereupon God the great Judge sustaining the plea passes the sentence of justification on the sinner, according to the everlasting agreement that passed betwixt the Father and the Son, Isa. liii. 11. The pannel gets the white stone and new name, and so is for ever set beyond the reach of condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. This is excellently described by Elihu, Job xxxiii. 22, 23, 24. 'Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.' This great benefit consists of two parts, as I observed before.

FIRST, The pardon of sin, Acts xiii. 38, 39. 'Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.' The sinner having this act of grace passed in his favour, is fully indemnified as to all crimes committed by him against the ho-

nour and law of the King of heaven, so as they shall never be charged upon him any more. Here I shall shew,

1. What pardon is.
2. The properties of it.
3. Its many sweet names, that discover the nature of it.

*First*, I shall shew what pardon is. It is not the taking away the nature of sin, pardoned sin is still sin; God justifies the sinner, but will never justify his sin. Nor is it the removing of the intrinsic demerit of sin; it still deserves condemnation, though it shall never actually condemn the sinner, Rom. viii. 1. Nor is it a simple adjourning of the punishment, a reprieve is no pardon.

There are four things to be considered in sin. (1.) The reigning power of it, which is broken in regeneration and sanctification, Rom. vi. 14. (2.) The blot and stain, which is taken away in the gradual advances of sanctification, 1 Cor. vi. 11. (3.) The indwelling power, which is removed in glorification, Heb. xii. 23. (4.) The guilt, which is taken away in pardon.

Guilt is an obligation to punishment. The guilt of an unjustified sinner is an obligation lying upon his head, to bear the wrath and eternal vengeance of God, to satisfy justice for the breaking of his law. It is a bond binding him to go to the prison of hell, and lie there till he hath paid the utmost farthing of his debt of sin, 2 Thess. i. 9. It arises from the sanction of the law, Gen. ii. 17. So that the sinner, like Shimei, having broke his confinement, is a man of death.

Pardon is the taking away of this guilt, this dreadful obligation. While the criminal stands bound with the cords of guilt for execution, a pardoning God says, 'Deliver his soul from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom, Job xxxiii. 24. Pardon cuts the knot, whereby guilt ties sin and wrath together, cancels the bond obliging the sinner to pay his debt, reverses the sentence of condemnation, and puts him out of the law's reach.

*Secondly*, I am to shew the properties of this pardon.—These are chiefly three. It is,

1. Full: Micah vii. 19. 'Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.' Col. ii. 13.—'Having forgiven you all trespasses.' All the man's sins are pardoned together. God gives no half-pardons; it suits not either the riches of his grace, nor the sinners necessity. For one leak will sink

the ship, and so will one unpardoned sin damn the soul. Great and small sins, sins against the gospel and the law, the most heinous and less heinous, in the happy hour of pardon, sink down all together into the sea of the Redeemer's blood, Jer. l. 20. And every sin is fully pardoned: God does not in justification pardon the fault, but reserve the punishment, as the Papists say, to make room for their satisfactions in this life and in purgatory. For where there is no fault, there can be no ground for punishment, and Christ's blood is the only purgatory, Heb. i. 3.

As to the question, Whether all sins, past, present, and to come, are pardoned together and at once in justification? As to sins past and present, there is no difficulty, they are all at once pardoned. As to sins to come, a justified person, being in Christ, can never more incur the guilt of eternal wrath, but only the guilt of fatherly chastisements, so that the pardon before described needs never be more renewed. And the only pardon a justified person has to seek is that of the guilt of fatherly anger with the intimation of the other pardon. For if a justified person could ever again be liable actually to the eternal wrath of God for his sin, then either he must fall from his union with Christ, which is indissoluble, or he may be in Christ, and yet under condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. Besides, a person once in Christ is no more under the dominion of the law, and therefore cannot be under its curse, Rom. vi. 14. and vii. 4\*.

2. Free: So says the text, *Being justified freely*, Col. ii. 13. It is free to us, though to Christ it was the price of blood. What have we to give for a pardon? Could we weep as many tears as the sea has drops, afflict ourselves as many years as the world has stood minutes, it would not buy a pardon, since it is not infinite, Psal. xlv. 8. Our best duties are but rags, and cannot cover the menstruous rags, and would but cover one unclean thing with another; the sins of our unrighteousness with the sins of our righteousness. The sinner never pays for it, nor can pay for it, Isa. xliii. 24, 25.

3. Unalterable and irrevocable. Temporal mercies are lent, but pardon is given; it is a grace-gift, (Rom. xi. 29.), that God never repents of the bestowing of. When God writes a sinner's pardon, whoever quarrel it, conscience, Sa-

\* See the author's *Miscellaneous Questions* quest. 2:



tan, &c. God says, What I have written, I have written. Come after what will, it must stand for ever. No following misdemeanors can take it off, Jer. xxxi. 34. 'I will forget their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' Isa. liv. 9.—'I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee, &c. A child of God may lose the sense of his pardon, but the pardon itself is written in the Mediator's blood, and so is one of those same mercies mentioned, Isa. lv. 3.

*Thirdly*, Farther to shew the nature of pardon of sin, it has many sweet names, discovering its nature. And,

1. It is a blotting out of sin: 'I, even I,' says Jehovah, 'am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake,' Isa. xliii. 25. This is an allusion to a creditor, who, when he discharges a debt, scores it out of his count-book. Sin is a debt, the worst of debts. We cannot pay it, we cannot escape the hands of our creditor. And, alas! we are ready to deny our debt, will not come to count and reckoning, as long as we can get it shifted. So the debt stands in God's book. But the sinner being apprehended, as said is, he is brought to count and reckoning. God produces the large account. The sinner's heart fails at the sight; he falls down, confesses his debt, and his inability to pay, flies to the great Cautioner, saying, 'Undertake for me,'—Psal. cxix. 122; and Christ says, All thy wants be upon me. Then God takes the pen, dips it in the Mediator's blood, and cross-scores all the sinner's account, Acts iii. 19. Col. ii. 14.

2. A not imputing of sin, Psal. xxxii. 2. 'Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.' This is a metaphor from merchants, who, when a rich friend undertakes for one of their poor debtors, charge their accounts no more upon him; they will seek him no more for it. God took Christ's single bond for the debt of all that would put themselves in Christ's poor's roll by faith. So as soon as a sinner comes to Christ by faith, and gives in his name as a broken man unable to pay his debt, accepting of Christ as Cautioner, God imputes sin no more to that man. What accounts have been taken on by the sinner, he leaves to the Son to clear with his Father. This is sustained in the court of heaven: the Creditor and the Cautioner take the matter between them, and the debt is charged no more on the sinner.

3. A taking of the burden of sin from off the sinner, Psal. xxxii. 1. Hos. xiv. 2. Sin is a heavy burden, a burden increasing every day, to the unpardoned sinner. It sunk down the angels from their first habitation, and is a weight that they and the damned in hell are wrestling under at this day, but unable to get it off. The unawakened sinner finds it not; but when the conscience is awakened, it burdens the sinner all over; it is a burden on his head, on his spirit, on his back. In the day of pardon, the sinner falls down under his burden, looks to Christ the great Burden-bearer, and God comes and takes his burden off his back, and bids him stand upright. And no less hand can do it, Numb. xiv. 17, 18, 19.

4. A washing of the sinner, 1 Cor. vi. 11. 'But ye are washed.' They that have unpardoned guilt on them, they have not only a heavy, but a foul, filthy burden on them.—And they must be washed and thoroughly washed, for it sticks dolefully to the soul, Psal. li. 2. 'Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.' Drift me as a fuller of waulker doth cloth in a waulk-mill. Compare Mal. iii. 2. Hence the Lord offers, Isa. i. 18. 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' In the day of pardon, the Lord sprinkles the sinner with the Mediator's blood, and he is made clean, yea dips him in that fountain, Zech. xiii. 1; and he is purged and purified from all sin, 1 John i. 7.

5. A dismissing or remission of sin, Matth. vi. 12. Rom. iii. 25. God does not only take it away, but sends it away. The sinner's guilt is laid over on Christ, as the scape-goat who bears it away never to return on the sinner. Sin is a strong tie, whereby the sinner is bound down to the pit, so as he cannot lift up his head to the Lord with true confidence. Pardon brings a relaxation to the sinner, cutting asunder these cords of death. It is a sending back of sin, away from the sinner, back to the devil from whence it came.

6. The dispelling of a thick cloud, Isa. xlv. 22. Sin is a cloud rising from below: a watery cloud, a black cloud, a thick cloud: which once drowned the whole world, except those in the ark. It hangs night and day over the head of the unpardoned sinner, go where he will. He cannot see

the face of God through it ; it veils his mercy, wraps him up in blackness of darkness, that he can have no communion with heaven. But pardon, like the shining sun, breaks through the cloud, and dissolves it; and like a mighty wind, there is a breathing from the throne of grace, that rends the cloud, and scatters it, be it never so thick; so that all the sinner's guilt as a cloud vanishes away, and appears no more. Thus the soul is restored to the light of God's countenance, and may look up with confidence and joy, Job xxxiii. 24, 26.

7. A casting of sin behind the Lord's back, Isa. xxxviii. 17. David says, ' his sin was ever before him,' Psal. li. 4. before him as the accuser stood before the accused face to face. Praying for pardon, he prays God would hide his face from it, Psal. li. 9. A pardoning God will not look on the sin of the sinner that is in Christ, Numb. xxiii. 21. ' He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.' The Lord sitting on a throne of grace, to which the believer carries his process from the throne of strict justice, when Satan gives in his bill or libel against the believer, takes it and casts it away behind his back, as not to look on it, nor charge him with it.

8. A casting it into the depths of the sea, Mic. vii. 19.—O the fulness of that expression ! He will not cast them into a brook or river, what falls in there may be got up again perhaps; but into the sea, where we reckon a thing dead that falls. But there are some shallow places in the sea; he will cast them into the depths of the sea, these devouring depths. But what if they sink not ? he will cast them in with force and power, that they shall go to the ground, and sink as lead in the ocean of the blood of Christ.

9. A covering of sin, Psal. xxxii. 1. This is an allusion to the Israelites in their camp in the wilderness, who were to go with a paddle, and cover their excrements, Deut. xxiii. 14. It is the same word in the Hebrew. It is a covering of it so as to hide it, that it shall not appear. Sin is the worst of pollutions, but a pardon spreads a cover over it, that it shall not appear any more. God condemned sin in the flesh of Christ, Rom. viii. 3. and therefore, as soon as the soul takes hold of Christ, the word of pardon goes out of the King's mouth, and sin, like the face of Haman, in such a case, is covered never to see the light any more.

10. *Lastly*, Which crowns all, a not remembering of sin,



Jer. xxxi. 34. What can be said more to shew the fulness of pardon? Many forgive, but they will never forget the offences done them: but our God, when he pardons, not only forgives, but as it were forgets the injury done to his glory by the sinner. It is true, God's perfections cannot admit a proper forgetting; but the believers sins are forgotten in law; there is an irreversible act of oblivion passed upon them all in the court of heaven; and God will not only not exact the punishment of them, but will treat believers as kindly as if they had never offended him. Looking on them through Christ, he beholds them without spot.

Behold the way to be secured against sin's finding you out in wrath. O unspeakable benefit! Well may we sing and say with David, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.'

SECONDLY, The acceptation of the person as righteous in the sight of God. God justifying a sinner does not only pardon his sin, but accepts and accounts his person righteous in his sight, 2 Cor. v. 21. 'He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' Rom. iv. 6. 'Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.' Chap. v. 19. 'By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' This is the import of justifying, namely, a declaring, accepting, or accounting one righteous, as one who being pursued before a court, gets his absolution, and is declared an honest man in the point wherewith he was charged. There is a twofold acceptation in point of righteousness here to be carefully distinguished.

1. An acceptation of a man's works as righteous. 2. Of his person. All righteousness is a conformity to a law. Whatsoever comes up to what the law demands, is righteous; and what doth not is unrighteous. God hath given unto man a law, viz. the moral law, which is the eternal rule of righteousness, that never changes. So all righteousness in the sight of God is a conformity unto that law. And there is no conformity to the law, but what is so in all points. So that righteousness is a perfect conformity to the ten commands in full obedience. Now, there is.

1. An acceptation of a man's works as righteous, Gal. iii. 12. 'The man that doth them shall live in them.' He that doth his works in a full conformity to the law, his works shall be accepted as righteous. But where is the man that can so do? The man Christ did so, and his works were accepted as righteous. But since God's judgment is according to truth, and he cannot account things to be what really they are not; and it is evident that even a believer's works are not righteous in the eye of the law; God neither doth nor can, in the justifying of a sinner, accept and account his works as righteous. So that this acceptation has no place in our justification. And though some of a believer's works, namely, his good works, are accepted of God, Deut. xxxiii. 11. Isa. lvi. 7. yet that is not in point of justification, but of sanctification; not as righteous, but as sincere tokens of their love to God, as the father accepts the work of his child, tho' it be not quite right, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

2. An acceptation of a man's person as righteous, Eph. i. 6.—'Hath made us accepted in the Beloved.' This may be done without any eye to a work done by the man himself. If a man were processed for a debt he really took on, and which he never paid in his own person, yet if he can produce the discharge of the debt given to one that paid it for him, he will be absolved, and the law will declare him to be owing nothing to the pursuer. Thus his person is accepted as righteous; and thus the believer is accepted as a righteous person in justification, though his works are not.

To be accepted as righteous, then, is to be accounted conformable to the law, a person of whom the law has what it requires, and of whom it has no more to demand. Its demands are extremely high; universal, perfect, and uninterrupted obedience. But the believer, when he is justified, is accepted, as one in respect of whom the debt is paid to the uttermost farthing, Rom. iii. ult. and x. 4. Col. ii. 10. This is an unspeakable benefit; for thereby,

(1.) The bar in the way of abounding mercy is taken away, so that the rivers of compassion may flow towards the believer, Rom. v. 1. &c. Job xxxiii. 24, &c. Many look confidently for the mercy of God, that will be disappointed; the unsatisfied law will draw a bar between them, and lock up saving mercy under the bars of God's justice and truth, which cannot be broken. But the believer being accepted

as righteous, the law's mouth is stopt, justice and truth have nothing to object against mercy's flowing to them.

(2.) The person is by this means adjudged to eternal life, even agreeably to the constitution of the law, 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. Acts xxvi. 18. Life was promised in the first covenant upon the fulfilling of the law. Now, the law having all it can demand of the believer, it is very agreeable thereto, that he be adjudged to everlasting life. Thus what sets salvation far from unbelievers, contributes to the believer's security. As if two men had been bound severally in one tack, and both desire to go away at a certain time, the conditions are fulfilled for the one, but not for the other. The tack that secures the one's liberty, will hold the other fast; till the conditions be fulfilled, he cannot go. So all men were bound in the covenant of works to yield perfect obedience; but having failed, Christ substituted himself in the room of those chosen from among them to everlasting life, and gave complete obedience to the law in their name and place: on that account they are accepted and adjudged to eternal life, and that agreeably to the law, which has got all its demands of them in their Surety. But the rest being still under the law, must perish.

(3.) The accusations of Satan and the clamours of an evil conscience are hereby to be stilled. See how the apostle triumphs over and bids a defiance to all the believer's accusers, Rom. viii. 33, 34. 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' God's sentence of justification may be opposed to the condemnation that one may be laid under from devils and men. He that has the discharge of the debt in his pocket, needs not fear what any can say or do unto him on account of the debt.

(4.) *Lastly*, He needs not seek acceptance of his person with God by his works, for he has it already another way. This is the way hypocrites take for acceptance, that will not come to Christ. But, alas! they do not consider that they are labouring in vain; it is impossible to get it that way, Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. 'What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: but



Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone.' It is one of the main differences betwixt the two covenants. In the first, man's works were to be accepted, and then his person; but in the second, first his person is accepted, and then his works. In the first, God dealt with man as a master with his servant, who pleases his master just as he works his work; in the second, as a father with his child, who pleases his father as he is his own child, and so his work is taken off his hand, such as it is. So they that seek acceptance with God by their works, go quite contrary to the nature of the covenant of grace, and hold on the way of the covenant of works, in which one will never thrive now. But the believer is not set down to blow at such a cold coal. So far of the parts of justification.

III. The next general head is to shew the cause of our justification, namely, the meritorious, or procuring or material cause of it. When we consider what the justification of a sinner is, well may we with wonder cry out, How can these things be! How can a guilty sinner be pardoned by a just and jealous God! an unrighteous one accepted as righteous, by an infinitely perfect judge! We see in the world, among men, such a thing brought to pass by several means.

1. By the powerfulness of the guilty party, that the judge dare not but let them go free. Some men are so unhappy for themselves and others as to be too strong for laws, as David complains of Joab and Abishai, saying, 'These men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me,' 2 Sam. iii. ult. and their begging a pardon is in effect the commanding of it. But what is worm-man before the omnipotency of God! where is he that is able to make head against him, that in his favour he should 'pervert judgment?' Job xxxiv. 12, &c.

2. By the weakness of the judge's understanding, that he cannot get guilt fixed on the guilty. Sometimes the crime is so hiddenly committed, that man cannot say, this is the guilty man. Sometimes, when the judge is convinced of the party's guilt, yet he can by no means legally fix it on him, and so there is a necessity to pass him. But God is omniscient, and can never be at a loss to discover the guilty per-

son, nor want evidence to fix it upon him, Psalm cxxxix. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 3.

3. By bribes. These blind the eyes of the wise and pervert judgment. But what can we give to God, who have nothing but what is his? Job xli. 11. His infinite fulness and all-sufficiency sets him beyond all possibility of affecting him thus, Job xxxvi. 19. And if we would essay to affect him with our goodness, repentance, or reformation, behold he is beyond these too, Job xxxv. 7. ‘If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?’

4. *Lastly*, By feud or favour prevailing over respect to justice. But with God there is no respect of persons. All are alike to him. And he neither despises any, so as not to regard what they do, which sometimes make some guilty ones get free, Job xxxvi. 5. And there is no preposterous pity with him in prejudice of justice, as there is in some men of a too soft disposition, to execute justice, Psal. xi. 6, 7.

From all which it follows, that there is some just ground upon which a sinner believing is justified before God. And we must inquire what that is,

FIRST, Negatively. It is not upon any worth or merit in the sinner himself. The text rejects that, *Being justified freely by his grace*. We neither are nor can be justified by our inherent righteousness, or good works. For,

1. Scripture expressly teaches, that we are not nor can be justified by our own works, but by faith, which leads us to the righteousness of another, Rom. iii. 20, 28. (compare Psal. cxliii, 2.) Gal. ii. 16. All works are excluded without distinction or limitation, and faith and works are opposed; the latter being inconsistent with gospel-grace, Rom. xi. 6.

2. The way of a sinner’s justification laid down in the gospel excludes boasting, Rom. iii. 27. But justification by works excludes it not, *ibid.* but leaves ground for it, Rom. iv. 2. It is the design of the gospel to exclude it, Eph. ii. 9. So that that way is opposite to the design of the gospel.

3. *Lastly*, All our good works are imperfect, Isa. lxiv. 6. and they are mixed with many sinful works, Jam. iii. 2. So that they can never make a righteousness which is truly and properly so in the eye of the law. And therefore to declare a man righteous on the account of them, would be to declare besides the truth. But ‘we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth,’ Rom. ii. 2. It must be a per-

fect righteousness on which a person can be justified before a holy, just God. For the relaxation of the gospel is not, that an imperfect righteousness is accepted instead of a perfect one, Rom. iii. ult. This perfect righteousness can never be patched up of our imperfect pieces of obedience.

Nay, suppose we could perfectly obey the law from the moment of our conversion, yea, of our birth, all is due for itself. How could that satisfy for the sin we were born with, or our sins before conversion? Repentance and tears cannot satisfy. Without shedding of blood there is no remission. And if once the law get down the sinner to be satisfied of him, how shall he get up again?

And neither can they contribute so much as in part to justify us. For, (1.) At that rate the grace of God should be so far excluded, and some room left for boasting. (2.) The cleanest of our own robes would effectually ruin us, if not washed in the Lamb's blood. And (3.) Christ's righteousness is perfect, and not dealt by shreds.

SECONDLY, Positively. The righteousness of Christ is the procuring cause of our justification. In handling of this, I shall shew,

1. What Christ's righteousness is.
2. That we are justified by Christ's righteousness.
3. What way a sinner can be justified by a righteousness not wrought by himself, but by Christ.
4. How the justifying of a sinner thus consists with the honour of God's justice, and of his law.
5. How it consists with free grace.

*First*, I shall shew what Christ's righteousness is. There is a twofold righteousness of Christ. (1.) His essential righteousness, which he had from eternity as God. This was common to all the three persons, and natural; and therefore cannot be that righteousness of Christ whereby sinners are justified. (2.) His Mediatorial righteousness, peculiar to him as the Father's servant, and the Mediator betwixt God and man. This is it. And that was his conformity to the law, in the perfect obedience he gave it, when he put his neck under the yoke of the law for an elect world, to satisfy it, in all that it had to demand of them.

1. He obeyed the commands of it, Phil. ii. 18. All the ten commands in their utmost extent had their due from him, in both tables. He was born holy, without sin; he



lived without blemish, being holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners; and was ever doing good. His obedience was universal; as to all the commands, he kept them; perfect as to every command, in the degrees of it required by the law; constant and perpetual, without the least interruption; and voluntary and unconstrained, in respect of the principle of heartiness and willingness in it. Thus he did, as became him, fulfil all righteousness, Matth. iii. 15.

2. He suffered the penalty of the law, which had been broken, Phil. ii. 8. The elect's debt was charged upon him completely, and he answered for it. Then 'he restored that which he took not away,' Psal. lxxix. 4. Death was the penalty, Gen. ii. 17. And death in its various shapes seized on him. The forerunners of it met him at his first entrance into the world, when he was born in a very low condition, and was forced to be carried into Egypt, to save him from Herod's bloody hands. They hung about him all the days of his life, so that he was a man of sorrows, though not of sin. At length death advanced against him with all its joint forces together: and heaven, earth, and hell, all set on him together, till they brought him to the dust of death; and then he was carried death's prisoner to the grave, where he lay till it was declared the debt was paid, and the law had no more to demand.

Thus he conformed himself to the law, and satisfied it in all points. And this was his righteousness, and that very righteousness upon which every believing sinner is justified, as a debtor is absolved from the creditor's libel of debt, seeing the debt is paid by a cautioner.

*Secondly*, I shall shew that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ.

1. This is the plain doctrine of the scriptures of the Old Testament, where he is called 'our righteousness,' Jer. xxiii. 6. See Isa. xlv. 24, 25. The apostle, 1 Cor. i. 30. tells us, that he is 'made righteousness to us,' not by affecting our righteousness, as he is our sanctification, for then justification and sanctification should be one and the same; but by imputation. And 2 Cor. v. 21. 'We are made the righteousness of God in him.' This was the only righteousness Paul desired to shelter himself under, Phil iii. 9. In a word, he is the second Adam, Rom. v. 18, 19. 'Therefore

as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners: so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'

2. Our justification is the justification of the ungodly, Rom. iv. 5; which cannot be therefore by our own righteousness, but the righteousness of another, even of a Redeemer, according to that, Rom. v. 9. 'Much more being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;' our sins being imputed to him, and his righteousness to us, Gal. iii. 13. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.'

3. *Lastly*, There is nothing else we can lay claim to, which can satisfy the law. And it must needs be satisfied ere the sinner can be justified. For the law must be magnified and made honourable. Hence the scripture does so much notice, that by this way the law is established, which otherwise would be undermined, Rom. iii. 31. its righteousness fulfilled, Rom. viii. 4. and hath its end for perfection, chap. x. 4.

*Thirdly*, I proceed to shew, what way a sinner can be justified by a righteousness not wrought by himself, but by Christ. This will be clear, if ye consider these four concurring grounds.

1. Christ's suretyship which he voluntarily took on himself, Heb. vii. 22. What Christ did and suffered, he did and suffered as a public person, for an elect world, not as a private person for himself. They took on the debt, he paid it for them; what the law or justice had to demand of him, he undertook to clear for their behoof. Thus a foundation is laid for justification by his righteousness.

2. The gospel-offer wherein Christ and all his salvation and benefits are freely offered to all such as will receive the same. There he is offered in a suitableness to the needs of sinners, Rev. iii. 18. And, amongst other things, Christ with his righteousness is offered to the unrighteous; as with his sanctifying Spirit to the unholy. Thus his righteousness is in a fair way to become theirs, as a free gift, to be theirs to whom it is offered.

3. The faith of the elect, whereby Christ's righteousness becomes actually theirs, Gal. ii. 16. 'Knowing that a man

is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.' For it is the very nature of faith to receive the free gift of righteousness, and by our receiving it upon the offer, it becomes ours. But there is no way to receive Christ's righteousness, but with himself; for God gives not Christ's benefits apart from himself, but with himself, which is the way of the covenant. And hence we may see three things:

(1.) That it is by faith only Christ's righteousness becomes ours, and that we have an actual interest in it, and are put in possession of it, Phil. iii. 9.—'The righteousness which is by faith.' Whatever foundation may be laid for it in the decree of God's election, and in Christ's satisfaction in our stead, yet it is not but by faith that we are possessed of it, or can plead it before the Lord. For as Adam's sin cannot hurt us till we have a being in him naturally; so Christ's righteousness cannot profit us till we be in him by faith.

(2.) How Christ's righteousness becomes ours by faith. Faith unites us to Christ in the way of the spiritual marriage-covenant, Eph. ii. 17. Being united to him, we have a communion with him in all the benefits of his purchase, and so in his righteousness, which is one of the chief of them. He himself is ours by faith; and so all that is his is ours for our good. This union being most real, the communion is so too. And hence we are said to be 'crucified with him,' Gal. ii. 20; 'buried with him,' Rom. vi. 4; yea, 'raised with him,' Eph. ii. 6.

(3.) How we are justified by faith. Not that faith is our righteousness; for our righteousness is not our faith, but we get it by faith, Phil. iii. 9. We are justified by it instrumentally, as we say one is enriched by a marriage, when by it he gets what makes him rich. So that faith is that whereby the soul is married to Christ; and being married to him, has communion with him in his righteousness, which justifies the person before God.

4. God's imputation, whereby he reckons Christ's righteousness to be the believer's in law: as the judge sustains the husband's payment for the wife's, and so absolves her from any action the pursuer can have against her for the debt,



Rom. iv. 6. This imputation or reckoning of the judge is according to the truth of the thing, Christ's righteousness being really the believer's righteousness antecedently to the imputation, namely, by faith. So that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer, because it is really his; and it is not therefore really his, because it is imputed to him.

*Fourthly*, I come now to shew how the justifying of a sinner thus consists with the honour of God's justice, and of his law. Very well does it so consist; for God's justice and law have more honour by Christ's obedience and death, than they could have had by the obedience or death of the justified party.

1. What are all the creatures together in comparison of the Son of God, in point of greatness and excellency? Did David's men say of him, who was but a creature of their own kind, 'Thou art worth ten thousand of us?' 2 Sam. xviii. 3. so may not we say of him, who was the Father's fellow, Thou art worth ten thousand world's of us? When a king puts his own Son, and heir to the crown, to death, for transgressing of the laws, his justice is more conspicuous, and the law more honoured, than by the execution of a thousand ordinary malefactors. So that we may say, that God's justice, and respect to his law, appeared more in mount Calvary, then it does in hell; for in the one was God, in the other was creatures groaning out for a broken law.

2. Suppose the company of the justified had, for the honour of the law and justice, been all sent to hell together; yet they would ever have been but satisfying, they never could have come up to the full satisfaction, so as there might be no more to demand of them. For infinite justice can never be completely satisfied by a finite creature; and therefore hell-torments are eternal. But here, by Jesus Christ, justice gets the least and last farthing paid down? and the law has till it can demand no more, John xix. 30.

3. *Lastly*, By Christ's obedience and death, law and justice are honoured both actively and passively. Now, if Adam had stood and been justified by his works, they had been only glorified actively. If the now justified had been damned for their sin, and suffered for it for ever, they had been only glorified passively; but now, by this way of the Mediator's suretyship, they are glorified both ways. He has obeyed the

law's commands to the least. He has suffered the wrath and curse of God to the utmost, which the creature could never have done; and borne it with that patience, submission, and resignation, and is quite beyond the reach of a mere creature, Isa. liii. 7.

So the believer's justification is on the surest grounds. The justice of God and his law consent to it, as that which is more for their honour than the ruin of the sinner.

*Fifthly*, I come now to shew how the justification of a sinner by the righteousness of Christ consists with free grace. If our justification be thus purchased by the perfect obedience and satisfaction of Christ, how is it of free grace? I answer, Very well. For,

1. God accepted of a surety, when he might have held by the sinner himself, and insisted that the soul that sinned might die, Rom. v. 8. What was it but free grace that moved him, when the neck of all the elect was upon the block, to allow it to rise up without receiving the fatal blow, and accepting of a Surety in their room? Could any man oblige the Judge to this? God did this freely.

2. God himself provided the Surety, John iii. 16. When Isaac lay bound on the altar, God provided the ram for the burnt-offering. What could man have done to get a cautioner when he broke, in the first covenant? Among all the beasts of the field there could not be found an atoning sacrifice, Psal. xl. 6. All the angels in heaven could not have afforded a cautioner. But free grace set infinite wisdom on work to find out one, which pitched on the Son of God, Psal. lxxxix. 19. So the Father gives his own Son, and the Son takes on man's nature, and pays the debt. What is there here but riches of grace to the justified sinner? So it is God's own righteousness, Phil. iii. 9. freely given to us. The which if it had not, as the tree fell, it behoved to have lain for ever.

3. *Lastly*, God demands nothing of us for it. It is a rich purchase, a dear purchase, the price of blood: but the righteousness and the justification are given to us most freely through faith. That is, we Have it, for Take and have. And the very hand wherewith we receive it, namely, faith, is the free gift of God unto us, Eph. ii. 8. So that most evident it is, that we are justified freely by his grace.

I come now to make some practical improvement of this important subject.

USE I. Of information. From what is said, learn,

1. That they are poor fools who have slight thoughts of sin and guilt. How many think very little of unpardoned guilt? There is a band lying on their head, obliging them to bear God's wrath for their sin; yet they rest in peace. They are lying under a sentence of condemnation, and know not how soon they may be led out to execution; yet they are at ease. They are drawing on more guilt daily without fear, and so making their bonds stronger. O, Sirs! look here and see the evil of sin, the dreadful nature of guilt. Nothing less could take sin away, and break asunder these bands, than the death of our Redeemer. Behold it in this glass, and be afraid of it.

2. How ill does it set us to have cheap thoughts of pardon! Num. xiv. 17, 19. 'God forgive me,' is a common word in some people's mouths, set off with a laughter. Most people fancy it is an easy thing to get a pardon. They know God is full of mercy, Christ of bowels, no more ado but to make a confession, pray to God to forgive them, and all is well; as if they might live like lions, and then leap like lambs out of Delilah's lap into Abraham's bosom. But if ever ye get a pardon, ye will change your mind, and find it has cost Christ dear; it is written in his blood, and will cost you broken bones ere ye obtain it.

3. Faith is absolutely necessary, Rom. v. 1. There is no justification without faith, and no access to heaven for the unjustified. While you continue in a state of unbelief, the several pieces of guilt gird you about as cords of death. And till ye believe and come to Christ, none of them all will be loosed, but they will weigh you down to destruction. O then come to Christ, and believe, accept of the Cautioner in the covenant. Without union with him, ye can have no share in his righteousness, and without faith no union with Christ.

4. No sin is so great, but one may be justified from it, if he will come to Christ, and close with him, 2 Cor. v. 21. It is Christ's righteousness upon which a sinner is justified, and that is an everlasting righteousness, a righteousness of infinite value; and no sin is so great, but it will swallow it up. There is none so broad but this white raiment will cover it. No guilt so strong but this will break it.



5. Most miserable will their case be, that shall be left to feel their own weight, Psal. xciv. ult. He ‘ shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness ; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.’ Many see not their need of Christ and his righteousness now : but when that falls on them for their own sin, that fell on him for the sins of those he bare, they will find their punishment like Cain’s greater than what they can bear. What the Cautioner was put to in paying the debt of sin, may fright every one with the thoughts of their answering for their own.

6. *Lastly*, Happy is the case of the justified, Psal. xxxii. 1. They are secured as to their state, no more under wrath, Rom. viii. 1. Their eternal salvation is sure, and can never fail, Rom. viii. 30. They have got over the gulph of condemnation, and shall never fall therein. Whom God justifies now, he will not condemn hereafter.

USE II. Of trial. By what is said, ye may try your state, whether ye be justified or not. And ye have reason to put this matter to trial accurately and exactly. For,

1. One thing is sure, that every man is once under a sentence of condemnation, Eph. ii. 3. Gal. iii. 10. Now, what course have ye taken to get from under this ? and if ye have been aiming at it, have ye carried your point, or not ? No man is carried out of the state of condemnation in a morning dream ; most men abide in the condemned state they were born in. O try it, whether ye be brought out of it or not.

2. As your state is in this life in point of justification, so it will be determined at death and the last day, Eccl. ix. 10. This life is the time of trial ; in the other, the judgment will pass upon men according to what they have been in this world. Now the door of mercy stands open for pardons ; but death being once come, there is no more access to a pardon. As the tree falls, it must lie.

3. Men are very apt to mistake their state in this matter. Many draw a pardon to themselves, that God will not set his seal to, and all it serves for is to blind their own eyes, Isa. xlv. 20. The foolish virgins dreamed very confidently of peace with God ; but they met with a sad disappointment. They called themselves the friends of the Bridegroom, but he shut the door on them as on his enemies.

4. *Lastly*, A mistake in this point is very dangerous. It makes people let the time of obtaining a pardon slip, as fancying they have it already. The foolish virgins might have got oil to their lamps, if they had seen their want of it, ere it was out of time. And thus it brings a ruining surprise, while people sleeping to death, in their dreams of peace, are awakened with the noise of war that God will have with them for ever and ever, without any more possibility of truce. Now, ye may try it by the following things.

1. Have ye been apprehended, sisted before God the Judge, and brought to a reckoning of your sins? No man gets out his absolution before the Lord, till he appear and answer to his libel. This is necessary to make the sinner flee to Christ; for this end the law was given, and for this end it is brought into the conscience, Gal. iii. 24. That state of sin which the soul never was made truly sensible of, does without doubt continue. They that never saw themselves in a state of condemnation are to this day under it. To what end should one have looked for healing to the brazen serpent, that were not stung with the fiery serpents? If the law has not had this effect on you to let you see your sin, and stopped your mouth before the Lord, ye are not come to Christ for justification. But if ye have seen your sin and state of condemnation by nature, and so have fled for mercy to Jesus Christ, then ye may conclude ye are justified.

2. I would ask you, Have ye been carried freely out of yourselves to Jesus Christ for righteousness, renouncing all other confidences in whole and in part, Phil. iii. 7, 8? There are many who, being convinced of sin, fall down and beg pardon, and hope for it upon their prayers, repentance, and reformation: but they never consider how the law shall be answered by a perfect righteousness. But the justified person sees, that there is no pardon to be got, without a righteousness that will satisfy the law, and that no work of his can do that; therefore he lays hold on Christ for his righteousness, and pleads that for pardon. They unite with the Mediator by faith, and so he spread his skirt over them. They get in under the covert of the Mediator's blood, and place their confidence there, believing that it is of sufficiency to shield them from wrath, and trusting upon his righteousness for that end, Phil. iii. 3. They continue not in mere suspense, James i. 6, 7. but so wrestle against doubting, as to cast

their anchor, and lay their weight for eternity, upon the righteousness of Christ.

3. The dominion and reigning power of sin is broken in the justified, Rom. vi. 14. Where the condemning power of sin, is removed, its reigning power is also taken away. If the condemned man get his remission, he is taken out of his irons, his prison, and the jailor's power; and so the pardoned sinner is no more taken captive by Satan at his will, 2 Tim. ii. ult. Will the liar lie on, the swearer swear on, the drunkard drink on, the formalist still hold on with his mere form of godliness, and hope that God has pardoned him? No; let no man deceive himself. Those chains of reigning lusts that are still rattling about thee, declare thee to be yet a condemned man, Rom. viii. 1, 2. Doubt ye not but if ye were justified, ye would be washed? 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. To pretend to the pardon of sin which thou art still living and going on in, is practical blasphemy, as if Christ were the minister of sin; it is a turning the grace of God into licentiousness, which will bring a heavy vengeance at length. But if the reigning power of sin, be broken in thee, thou art a justified man; it is a sign thou art healing, when the strength of the disease of sin is abating.

4. Habitual tenderness of conscience with respect to sin, temptations, and appearance of evil, is a good sign of a justified state, Acts xxiv. 16. Burnt bairns dread the fire; and the man who has brought himself under a sentence of death, if he escape he may be thought, he will beware of falling into the snare again, Isa. xxxviii. 17. compare ver. 15. Justified persons may fall into acts of untenderness many a time; but habitual untenderness is a black mark, when people habitually and ordinarily take to themselves a sinful latitude in their thoughts, words, or actions. It is a sad sign that sin has never been made very bitter to them, when they can so easily go into it. It is easy to pretend to tenderness in opinions, and with respect to church-differences; but I would to God there appeared more tenderness among us in matters of morality, that there were more sobriety among us, that people who have money to spare, would give it to the poor, and not lay it out in a way that God has so often visibly blasted, or spend it on their lusts; that men would not by their presence, or otherwise encourage penny-weddings (condemned both by the law of the land and the church,) these nurseries of profaneness,



which have so often among us left a stink behind them in the nostrils of truly-tender persons, and before a holy God. I would recommend to you the apostle's general rule, Phil. iv. 8. 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'

5. *Lastly*, The fruits of faith in a holy life. We are justified by faith without works; but that faith that justifies is always followed with good works, Acts xv. 9. If the curse be taken away, under which the soul remains barren, it will become fruitful in the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23. Our faith justifies our persons as it receives Christ with his righteousness; but our faith must be justified by our works, i. e. it must be by our good works evidenced to be true faith. Therefore the apostle James disputes against that faith that is without works, shewing it to be no true justifying faith, James ii. 17, 18. There is a difference betwixt justification and sanctification, but they are inseparable companions. And no man can evidence his justification without the fruits of holiness. Examine yourselves by these things, what state ye are in before God.

USE III. Of exhortation. This I shall address both to sinners and saints.

*First*, To sinners yet in the state of sin and wrath. Here is good news of pardon and acceptance with God for you. I would exhort you to be concerned to get out of the state of wrath and condemnation; and while God is sitting on a throne of grace, do not slip the opportunity, but sue out your absolution from before the Lord in his own way. Take no rest till ye be justified before God through Christ. To make way for this exhortation, I will lay before you the following motives.

*Mot. 1.* While you are out of a justified state, a sentence of condemnation stands against thee in the court of heaven, and thou knowest not how soon it may be executed, Gal. iii. 10. John iii. 18. and ult. If thou wert under a sentence of death by the laws of men, wouldst thou not bestir thyself for a pardon, if there were any hope? But, poor soul, thou art under a sentence of eternal death; and yet thou livest at ease. God's law has condemned thee as a malefactor, his

truth confirms the sentence, and justice craves execution. All things are ready for it, Psal. vii. 12, 13. When thou liest down, thou hast no security that it shall not be executed ere thou arise; and when thou goest out, thou hast no security that it shall not be executed ere thou come in. Only long-suffering procures thee a reprieve one day after another, to see if thou wilt sue out a pardon. But as secure as thou art the sword of justice hangs over thy head by the hair of long-tired patience; and if that break, thou art a dead man.

*Mot.* 2. A pardon and acceptance with God is not so easily obtained as people generally think. God gives pardon freely, yet none come by it lightly. They that get it, get it so as they are taught to prize the mercy, Mic. vii. 18. They that know not the evil of sin, nor the holy just nature of God, and that were never pressed with the sense of unpardoned guilt, think it a very easy thing to get a pardon, as if there were no more but to ask it and receive. But I would have you to consider,

(1.) The justifying and pardoning of a sinner is one of the greatest works of God. It is a greater work than to make a world. God had no more ado but to say, in the creation, 'Let there be light, &c. and there was.' But when sinners were to be absolved, justice stands up for satisfaction. The truth of God for the honour of a broken law, wisdom is set awork to find out a way how pardoning mercy may get a vent; and for that cause the Son of God pays down the price of blood to buy the absolution. If God could have absolved the sinner from guilt and punishment by a bare word, how would he have passed by that easy way, and fetched a compass by the blood of his own Son? John iii. 16. And after all it is a work of power to be exercised according to the greatness of mercy, Num. xiv. 17, 19.

(2.) Sin is the greatest of evils, no wonder it be hard to take it away. It is of all things most contrary to the holy nature of God, Hab. i. 13. When thou goest on in thy sin, thou art engaged against all the attributes of God. It is a daring of his justice, an invading of his sovereignty, a defying of his power, an abusing of his patience, and a despising of his love, mercy, and goodness. It contradicts his will; thereby the potsherds strive against their Maker, and lusts are set up against his holy law. It robs him of the glory due to him from his creatures, and turns to his dishonour. When

God had perfected the frame of the world, and made man and all the creatures for his glory, sin entering marred the whole frame, and made the workmanship of his own hands dishonour him. O! is it not a great work then to get a pardon, and all these injuries buried in forgetfulness with a holy jealous God?

(3.) God's elect have endured sad breakings of heart from the time they are made sensible of sin, till they have got their absolution from it, Acts ii. 37. They have known the terror of the Lord, to the breaking of their bones, ere they could get a glimpse of his reconciled countenance. Think ye as light of pardon as ye will, if ever the Lord come to give you a spiritual medicine to cause you sweat out the poison of sin, it will make you sick at the heart, if it bring you not to the last gasp, Isa. xxxiii. ult.

(4.) *Lastly*, If ever ye get a pardon, there will be an awful solemnity at the giving of it, Psal. lxxxix. 14. and it will be a very strong faith that will not receive it with a trembling hand. Hos. xi. 10. compare chap. iii. ult. 'They shall fear the Lord,' Heb. 'fear to the Lord.' For God gives no pardons but what are written in the blood of a Redeemer, sufficiently testifying his detestation of the crime; none are got but through the wounds of a Redeemer. So that the very throne of grace stands on justice fully satisfied; and thou shalt be made to say when thou gettest the pardon, as Jacob did of the place where he had slept all night, 'How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this the gate of heaven,' Gen. xxviii. 17.

Therefore look on it as a matter of the greatest weight, that will not be slightly managed, and to purpose too.

*Mot. 3.* Consider the dreadful disadvantages that attend an unjustified state. While ye are unjust,

1. Ye can have no access to God, nor communion with him, Rom. iii. 3. Unpardoned guilt is a partition-wall betwixt God and you, Isa. lix. 2. It stands as the angel with the flaming sword to guard the tree of life, that ye can have no access to it. It is true, ye may attend public ordinances, and go about private and secret duties; but they are all lost, as to communion with God, in the great gulph of an unpardoned state. Ye cannot have a comfortable word out of his mouth, nor a smile of his face.

2. Ye can have no peace with God, Rom. v. 1. What



Jehu said to Joram, God says to every unjustified sinner pretending peace with him, ‘What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts, are so many?’ 2 Kings ix. 22. It is sin that makes God an enemy to the work of his own hands; and while it is not forgiven, there can be no reconciliation. How can they think they can have peace with God whom his law condemns? What peace ye have in your consciences, arises from stupidity and presumption; it is stolen, and is none of God’s allowance, Isa. lvii. ult. Neither could ye command it, or retain it, if ye saw your case.

3. Ye can have no fruits of holiness. The conscience must be purged, ere one can serve God acceptably, Heb. ix. 14. or do any work good in God’s sight, 1 Tim. i. 5. Justification and sanctification are inseparable, and a justified state goes before a holy life; ‘for to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,’ Rom. iv. 5. While a man is unpardoned, the curse lies on him; and it is a blasting withering curse, like that on the fig-tree, that no fruit of holiness can grow where it comes. For it stops the communication of sanctifying influences; and the earth shall sooner bring forth its fruits while the influences of the heavens are restrained, than a soul shall do any good work without the influences of Christ’s Spirit, John xv. 5.

4. All you do is turned to sin by this means, Psal. xiv. 1. A soul unjustified, is as a tainted vessel that turns every liquor that is put into it. Hence your very civil actions are turned to sin, Prov. xxi. 4. natural actions, Zech. vii. 6. yea, and your religious actions too, Prov. xv. 8. Isa. lxvi. 3. For as the purest liquor put into a vessel for base uses is loathed, so are the best performances of an unpardoned sinner, by a holy God. For whatever they be as to the matter of them, they are selfish and hateful as to the principle end, and manner.

5. *Lastly*, Hence your accounts are running on every day and moment to the avenging justice of God, Rom. ii. 5. Thou art still deeper and deeper in that fearful debt; the cords of thy guilt are growing stronger and stronger. Thy crimes and grounds of condemnation are multiplied more and more; and though it is dying for all, yet the more thy punishment will be increased, that the pieces of guilt increase.

It is true, that every one is sinning daily ; but a justified person's debts are not charged upon him for eternal wrath, but temporary chastisements ; so that theirs is but an account of pennies, while thine is that of talents.

*Mot.* 4. Consider the unspeakable advantages of a pardoned justified state. He that is in that state, is a happy man, whatever his case be otherwise in the world, Psal. xxxii. 1. —He may meet with many crosses in a present world, but the white stone given him of God will make him happy for all that, Hab. iii. 17. One may be rich, yet reprobate ; his portion fat, but his soul lean ; applauded on the earth, but damned in hell. These things come from God's hand ; and the crown of worldly felicity set on with his bare hand, he will kick off with his foot at length. But a pardon comes from his heart, as an eternal love token, Rom. xi. 29. O ! let the happiness of a justified state engage you to seek after it. Get into the state of pardon ; and,

1. Ye shall have peace with God, Rom. v. 1. Sin is the only controversy betwixt God and a soul ; when that is removed, the parties are reconciled, and meet together in peace. God justifying the sinner, lays by the legal enmity he bare to him, while he lived in a state of sin. He pursues him no more with wrath or curse. The heavens that are now black above your heads shall clear up, and ye shall enjoy a pleasant sunshine, if the cloud of guilt were dispelled. O, Sirs ! do ye not value peace with God ? If ye do, then seek to be in this state.

2. It will bring you other peace besides. Peace of conscience follows upon a justified state. Unpardoned guilt makes a foul and condemning conscience, which gnaws a man like a worm. But when one gets his conscience sprinkled with the Redeemer's blood, and his sin pardoned, the conscience is cleansed, Heb. ix. 14. And then it is turned to a good conscience, which sings sweetly in a man's bosom, 2 Cor. i. 12. Yea, ye shall have peace with the creatures, that are at war with the unpardoned sinner, Job v. 23. Having thus gained the favour of the Master of the great family, the servants shall all turn to be your friends.

3. Ye shall have access to God with confidence and holy boldness, Eph. iii. 12. 1 John iii. 21. God shall no more sit on a tribunal of strict justice to you, with the flaming sword before him ; but on a throne of grace, with a rainbow

round about it, Rev. iv. 3. And ye may come to him with all your wants, complaints, &c. as unto a friend, yea, a Father in Christ, confidently expecting all good things from him, Job xxxiii. 24, 26. For being justified, ye have a satisfaction to plead, upon which he can deny you no good thing; ye are cloathed with a righteousness that makes you spotless, and are under a covert, where love and favour shine continually.

4. Ye shall be delivered from the dominion of sin, Rom. vi. 14. and be made to bring forth the fruits of holiness, Col. ii. 13. As soon as ever the remission is passed the seals, so soon the orders are given to deliver the prisoner, to beat off his chains, and open the prison-door, and set him at liberty. The apostle tells us, that 'the strength of sin is the law,' 1 Cor. xv. 56. namely, the law condemning and cursing the sinner; so that the sinner being under the curse, sin reigns in him with a full sway, as the thorns and briers in the cursed ground. But the law's curse and condemning power being removed in justification, sin loses its strength. And the blessing coming in its room, the soul is made fruitful in holiness. Hence faith's sanctifying virtue is so much insisted on in the word, Acts xv. 9.

5. It will take the venom out of your crosses, and the strongest afflictions ye meet with, 1 Cor. xv. 55. The venom of afflictions is the curse in a cross; but pardon takes out that. A bee-sting your troubles may have after that, but the serpent's sting shall no more be found in them. A pardoned state sanctifies crosses to a man; and a sanctified cross is better than an unsanctified comfort. A loss with God's favour, is more than an enjoyment with God's wrath.

6. It will sweeten your mercies with an additional sweetness, and make a small mercy more valuable than the greatest earthly comfort an unpardoned sinner can have, Psal. xxxvii. 16. Who would not chuse to live at peace in a cottage, on coarse fare, than to be in the case of one under a sentence of death, liberally fed in a castle till the execution-day? A mercy without a pardon will go short way; the man may cry, 'There is death in the pot,' Mal. ii. 2. But a pardon puts a blessing in a mercy, purifies and refines it, putting a stamp of God's good will on it, Gen. xxxiii. 10.

7. It will make all things work together for your good, Rom. viii. 28. God's wrath and anger against a person mars



all to him. It makes every thing work for their ruin : the unpardoned man's crosses are curses, and his good things as well as his evil things work against him, Prov. i. 32. But by the Lord's favour all things shall work through grace to bring the believer to glory. God is for him, who then can be against him ? Whether the wind blow on his face, or on his back, it shall forward him to the happy harbour.

8. It is the way to live comfortably, Isa. xl. 1, 2. None in all the world have so good a reason to live comfortably as the justified person. He that gets the white stone of the Lord's absolution, if he can but look on it, his soul may rejoice within him. If all things in the world were going wrong, he has that to comfort him, that God is his friend. However little he may have in hand, he has all the heavenly inheritance in hope. The uncomfortable life the pardoned sinner has, arises from want of consideration ; but the more clearly he sees his matters, he will have the more comfort.

9. *Lastly*, It is the way to die safely and comfortably too. The pardoned sinner may triumph over death and the grave, Rom. viii. 38, 39. 1 Cor. xv. 55. When death comes to him, he has his discharge, it cannot harm him. As for the tribunal, he cannot be condemned there, for he is already justified. He shall swim safe through these dark waters, for the weight of guilt is removed, he cannot sink in them.

*Mot. 5.* A pardon is in your offer. There is none of us all under the sentence of condemnation, but may get it reversed, if we will come to Christ, and sue out an absolution in the Lord's own way, Isa. lv. 7. He is a just God we have to do with, but there is a way how pardoning mercy may reach us in a full consistency with justice. The white flag of peace does yet hang out, and the market of free grace stands open. There is an act of grace and full indemnity through Jesus Christ proclaimed in the gospel. Come in, sinners, and take the benefit of it. Why will ye stand out, and despise the King of Heaven's free pardon ?

*Object.* My sins are so great, that I can have no hope of pardon, whatever others may. *Ans.* Neither the greatness nor the multitude of your sins, nor your backsliding into them again and again, put you beyond the reach of pardon. For observe, I pray you, the foundation of pardon is Christ's righteousness, and that is the righteousness of God, Rom. x. 3. Now, your sins are the sins of a creature ; and shall not

the righteousness of God be able to remove the unrighteousness of the creature? And it is to all, and upon all that believe, Rom. iii. 22. and remember, as the one abounds, the other superabounds, Rom. v. 20.

God is pleased to heap words of grace one upon another to put tempted sinners in hopes of pardon, Joel ii. 13. ‘Rent your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil,’ Isa. i. 18. ‘Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’—Chap. lv. 7. ‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon.’ And he has set up many instances of pardoning mercy, that none may despair of finding mercy that will come to him in his own way. Adam, the leading sinner in the world was pardoned. Manasseh, who gave up himself to the most gross sins of devilry, murder, &c. yet received a pardon. Paul, who was a persecutor, a blasphemer, and injurious, obtained mercy. And the very Jews that murdered the Lord of glory, were pardoned through his blood.

These instances of mercy are indeed abused to the encouraging of sinners to go on in their sin: but they were never designed for that; and it is a dreadful sign, when the very gospel-news of pardon become a trap and a snare. But God designed them for thy encouragement, O trembling sinner, that would fain come to God through Christ for pardon, if thou durst; and by these he bids thee welcome, Eph. ii. 7. Come forward, then, and sue for thy pardon.

*Mot. 6.* The time of pardoning grace will not last, Isa. lv. 6. ‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.’ The day will come when God will not be intreated, when abused patience will break forth into fury, Luke xiii. 24, 25. ‘Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and

he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are.' Beware lest ye sit your day of grace, and it come to that, ye find no place for repentance, though ye should seek it carefully with tears. Remember those that were bidden to the supper, and shifted, and were excluded, Luke xiv. 24. Delay no more. A moment's delay may be an eternal loss.

*Lastly*, I beseech you remember, that your eternal state depends on your being justified now or not. If ye be justified now, ye shall be saved eternally; if not, ye are lost for ever. And how dreadful will the condemnation of those be, who by slighting an offered pardon trample on the blood of Christ, which was shed for the remission of sins!

I shall conclude this use of exhortation with a few directions.

1. Labour to get your hearts wrought up to a deep concern for a pardoned state. And for this cause, believe your miserable state by nature, that ye are once condemned. Take a view of the holy righteous law, and your innumerable transgressions of it, besides your sinful nature. Look to the flaming justice of God? behold it in the case of the damned, in the case of Christ suffering, and see what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.

2. Go to God in Christ, and confess your sins, and condemn yourselves. Lay them out before God with shame and confusion of face, with their several aggravations. Make a full and free confession, insisting most on those sins that have been most dishonouring to God in you. Acknowledge yourselves justly condemned by the law, and God to be righteous, if he should put the sentence into execution.

*Lastly*, Solemnly and sincerely accept of Christ in the covenant of grace held forth in the gospel. Receive him with his righteousness, and enter under the covert of his blood. And lay all your guilt over on him, believing his ability and willingness to remove it. And accepting of Christ for justification and sanctification, ye shall be accepted and pardoned.

*Exhort.* 2. To justified persons. This privilege calls you to several duties.

1. Love the Lord, and love him much, for much is forgiven you. This may be oil to that holy flame, and therefore love will continue in heaven for ever.

2. Be of a forgiving disposition, Eph. iv. ult. 'Be ye kind



one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.' The same Saviour that brought in remission of sins, binds us to love our enemies. And the bitter revengeful spirit against those we think have wronged us, is a sad sign that our own sin is unforgiven of God, Matth. vi. 12. 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.' They who have found what a dreadful weight sin unpardoned is, and have at length got it removed, will thereby be helped to forgive.

3. Walk humbly. Ye are justified, but it is by the righteousness of another. Ye are pardoned, but it was procured to you by the satisfaction of a Saviour. Your debt is paid, your discharge is got up; but thanks to free grace, not to you, for it.

4. Bear your troubles and crosses in a world patiently.—Your life that was forfeited is safe by grace; therefore take thankfully any troubles you meet with. For why should a living man complain, especially one that deserved to die, and yet is adjudged to life?

5. *Lastly*, Walk tenderly. God pardoning a sinner, dismisseth him as Christ did the penitent adulteress, John xii. 11. 'Go, and sin no more.' Let not your broken bones be forgotten, but walk softly all your years. And if ye be pardoned, shew it by your holy and tender walk.

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#### OF ADOPTION.

2 COR. vi. 18.—*And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

**T**HESE words do hold forth the singular privilege of those that obey the call of the gospel, ver. 17.—'Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.' That call is not a call to separate from a church, but from those that are out of the church, ver. 14. 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?' not only from outward visible communion with idolaters, but to separate from the unconverted to inward invisible communion with the family of God,

ver. 18. In a word, it is a call to come out of the world lying in wickedness, and to join the heavenly society.

There are but two families in the world, and to one of the two every man and woman belongs. One is Satan's family, the other God's. And these are the two terms of effectual calling. (1.) The term from which sinners are called by the gospel; that is Satan's family, which they are born in, Psal. xlv. 10. And it is made up of all the unconverted world, and fallen angels. These have a dreadful communion among themselves under one head, the devil. That is the family of unbelievers, unrighteousness, and Belial. And to come out of this the gospel calls you, ver. 17. 'Wherefore come out from among them, &c. (2.) The term to which; that is God's family, made up of saints, holy angels, and Christ as the Elder Brother having dominion over the family; he their head, and the head of Christ God, 1 Cor. xi. 3. That is the family of believers, righteousness and Christ. And to this the gospel calls you to come.

Thus the text proposes a great privilege of those that are effectually called, that is, adoption into the family of God. And here consider,

1. The family they are brought into; it is that of *the Lord Almighty*. No body needed to adopt, but he that had something to give. The family which believers are taken into is a rich family, seeing the Head thereof is the Almighty, who because he is Almighty can, and because he is a Father will, make his own perfectly happy.

2. Upon whom this privilege is conferred; that is, those who come out of the world and the family of Satan, and answer the gospel-call. (1.) They are aliens, they are by nature strangers to the family they are taken into; they are of an ill house, that is an enemy to the house of heaven. And whatever house men would pitch on, it would not readily be such an one: but free grace takes people from such a house. (2.) But they are separatists from it, they are such as are sick of their father's house, and people that are their own, and come off from it by faith to the Lord, upon the gospel-call. Like Ruth, they leave their natural country and kindred, and come to incorporate with that other society.

3. The relation they are put into in God's family. It were much if they of the house of hell might be received into the house of heaven, in the quality of sojourners to

lodge a while there; more, if in quality of domestic servants; and more, if in quality of friends: but they are received in quality of children of the family. And as all relation is mutual, upon the one hand, God becomes their *Father*. That is a kindly word, and that he is to them. On the other, they become *sons and daughters*. Observe, how particular this promise is, expressly made to both sexes. Whatever privileges in external things men had of old, or yet have above women; yet respect of spiritual privileges in Christ they are alike. The one are sons, and the other daughters, both children equally dear to our heavenly Father.

4. *Lastly*, The confirmation of this privilege, and the promise thereof, *saith the Lord*. If a man or angel had said it, it could hardly have gained credit, that there should be such an adoption. But God himself says it; and it is impious therefore to disbelieve it.

The sum of the words may be comprised in the following doctrine, viz.

DOCT. 'As adoption into God's family is the peculiar privilege of those that are effectually called, so whosoever will comply with the gospel-call, and come away, shall be adopted into God's family: God will be a Father to them, and they shall be his sons and daughters.'

This doctrine has two branches.

I. Adoption into God's family is the peculiar privilege of those that are effectually called.

II. Whosoever will comply with the gospel-call, shall be adopted into God's family; God will be their Father, and they shall be his sons and daughters.

I shall prosecute these two in order.

I. Adoption into God's family is the peculiar privilege of those that are effectually called. Adoption follows our justification; and is 'an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.'

Here I shall endeavour to shew,

1. What adoption in general is.
2. What are the parts of adoption.
3. The properties of this adoption.
4. Apply the subject.

FIRST, I shall shew what adoption in the general is.—



That we may understand this, we must consider, in the first place, what adoption among men is; and that is twofold.

1. Proper adoption, much used among the ancient Romans and Greeks, was a legal act, imitating nature, introduced for the comfort of those who wanted children, whereby one that was the natural child of another man became the son of the adopter. It was a judicial action done in presence of the magistrate; among the Greeks by way of a testament, signed and sealed in his presence; among the Romans, the adopter, the natural father, and the son, appearing before the magistrate, the adopter taking hold of the son, said, 'I avouch this person to be my son, and I have bought him with this money.' The natural father judicially yielded up his right to the adopter. And the magistrate adjudged him to be the adopter's son. The party being adopted, was made free of the city, and not only taken into the adopter's family, but ascribed into the tribe or fraternity of the adopter. It had place among those that either had no children at all, by their death or otherwise had no lawful children. But the law restrained them that they might not adopt, but in a suitableness to the quality of the adopter; so that a nobleman might not adopt a commoner, lest the dignity of the adopter should be stained by the meanness of the adopted.

2. Metaphorical adoption, which is ingrafting. Thus the stock adopts the branch that is cut off another tree, and put into another branch of it. For as the adopter takes another man's child, and nourishes him as his own; so the ingrafted branch is counted among the natural branches, and partakes with them of the sap of the stock. Hence you may see, that

Divine adoption is an act of God, whereby he does judicially take (and constitute) those that are by nature strangers to him, and none of his family, members of his family, and his own children, giving them the privileges of his children, or of his house as children. And it is twofold.

1. External and federal which is common to the members of the visible church, which is a society gathered out from the rest of the world, the visible family of God on earth, enjoying peculiar privileges, beyond the rest of the world. This adoption belonged to Israel of old, Rom. ix. 4. And God owned them as his sons in the midst of Egypt, Exod. iv. 22, 23. But now it is extended to us Gentiles, Gal. iii. 26,

27. This family has always, since Cain was cast out, been a separated family in the world, chosen out from among the rest ; so that they are called ‘ the sons of God,’ Gen. vi. 2. And so it is still, and will be to the end.

This adoption, though it is really in itself a high dignity, so that, in comparison of them, the rest of the world are but as dogs to children, Matth. xv. 26. yet it is not a saving relation to God. And it may be lost, as the Jews rejected did theirs. Nay one may retain it; and yet his natural relation to the devil remain, as to his internal state, so as he may be lost for ever notwithstanding of it, John viii. 44. But this is not the adoption we inquire into ; but,

2. An internal and saving adoption, which is peculiar to believers, or those effectually called and converted, which make up the invisible church and family of God on earth, enjoying spiritual privileges, beyond all others without or within the visible church. These are they that are chosen out from the unconverted world lying in wickedness, according to the decree of election, and brought and ingrafted into Christ, and made real members of his body, John i. 12, 13. These God adopts, judicially avouches them to be his sons and daughters, and Satan, their natural father, is obliged to quit his right to them ; and they thereby are, and are accounted, no more of his family, but children of God, and have a right to the saving special privileges of the children of his family, Gal. iv. 5. Eph. i. 5. Hence,

(1.) Adoption is not a real change of the sinner’s nature; but, as justification a relative change of his state. By nature we are in a state of condemnation, but out of that we are brought in justification ; and out of the state of alienation from God, by adoption. So that we are no more aliens and foreigners to the family of heaven, but domestics of it ; no more children of Satan, but of God, Eph. ii. 19. Our names are enrolled among those of the family ; and though a new nature accompanies it, yet adoption itself is a new name, not a new nature, Rev. ii. 17. though it is not an empty title, but has vast privileges attending it.

(2.) It is done in an instant, not carried on by degrees. For it is not capable of degrees, and there is no intermediate state betwixt sonship to God and to Satan ; but as soon as ever a person believes in Christ, he is justified and adopted ; as soon as the soul is married to Christ, she becomes a daugh-

ter of the house of heaven, and her relation to that of hell is extinguished, John i. 12. It is true, there will be at the great day a solemn declaration of that adoption, and the adopted will then be perfectly past their minority, and enter to the full possession of the inheritance in their whole man; in which sense the apostle says, 'We wait for the adoption,' Rom. viii. 23. 'But now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,' 1 John iii. 2.

SECONDLY, I come to shew what are the parts of adoption. These are two. 1. The receiving the sinner into the number of God's children. 2. Giving him a right to their privileges. That we may the more distinctly take up this, we shall take a view of this whole blessed transaction, from the first to the last, together with the parties concerned in it. And,

1. The adopter is God, and in respect of dispensation the Father, the first person of the blessed Trinity, the Father of our Lord Jesus. For as the work of redemption is the Son's, and the work of our sanctification the Spirit's, so our justification and adoption are the Father's, Eph. i. 3, 5. And hence the Father's love is celebrated in this benefit, 1 John iii. 1. 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God;' tho' not excluding that of the Son and the Holy Ghost, who are one God with him, and act their part in this blessed transaction, bringing it about. And because, God is the Sovereign of the universe, therefore he is also the Judge, who passeth the sentence, and adjudgeth the adopted sons to himself.

2. The party adopted is an elect sinner; for it is done in pursuance of God's eternal predestination, and falls on those, and only those, who are elected to it from eternity, Eph. i. 5. God from all eternity foreseeing, that though Adam was to be created a son of God in his own likeness, yet he would degenerate, and all his race be born children of wrath, and of the devil, resembling Satan naturally, and prone to obey him, as children do a father, John viii. 44. decreed, not to lose the whole race, but to bring a certain number of them into his family again by the way of adoption, the way of natural (Adam's) sonship failing, leaving others to continue in their



natural father's house and family. And all these elect ones were known from eternity to God, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

3. The natural father is the devil, that enemy of God, John viii. 44. His children they are by nature as well as others. He has a great family, one part whereof dwells in the lower house; these are the damned spirits in hell. And of those that are once got thither, there are no more hopes nor possibility of their ever getting out of his family. These are entered to the inheritance of their father, in almost full tale already. Another part of them are sojourning in the upper house of this world, and that house is very throng with his family. It contains a people that are his, Psal. xlv. 10. Many entire nations and families are there, wherein there are none but that are his. Nay, there is a world of men and women he has in this house, 1 John v. 19; and himself is god and father of the family, 2 Cor. iv. 4. who all can have no hope of a better inheritance than he has given them, even the wrath and curse prepared for him and his. It is out of this part of Satan's family that the adopted are taken.

4. The suitableness of this adoption to the glory of the Adopter, and to his family. We dare not say, he needed to take this way of furnishing himself with children, as in the case of adoption among men. He was happy in himself from all eternity, in his Son by eternal generation, when there was neither man nor angel in his family. And had all been lost together, his happiness had not been one whit diminished. But we may say, that this device of adoption was a device becoming him, and very agreeable to his glory and family.

His family did originally consist of two sorts of sons, angels and men, (not to speak here of his eternal Son). Angels were the one sort, Job xxxviii. 7; man the other, Luke iii. 38; the one as well as the other created after his own image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. The one were kept in the higher house, the other in the lower. But sin entering among them, many of the family died such a death as quite dissolved the relation betwixt God and them, that they could no more call him Father, nor could he own them for his children. It seized those first of the upper house, and multitudes of them (for in one man was a legion of them) dropt down to the pit, 2 Pet. ii. 4. They infected those of the lower house, and they that received the infection from them, conveyed it to all the rest, so that death passed upon all

that part of the family to a man, Rom. v. 12. So that here was an empty house made.

This evinces the suitableness of making up the family again, by the way of adoption, which by spiritual death received such a diminution. As also the suitableness of adoption from among men, which the fallen angels have no share in. For since they were not all to be recovered that had fallen, but the justice of God was to be glorified in some of them, it was agreeable to the wisdom of God to adopt men, not fallen angels, since the whole mankind was lost, but not the whole angelic kind. Multitudes of angels stood when the rest fell, but all mankind was lost together.

5. But what shall be done for the law that forbids the staining of the Adopter's honour by the meanness of the party adopted? This was a notable impediment in the way of this device of repairing the family. The Adopter can be no higher, for he is the Sovereign King of the world; the adopted no lower, for they are not only the children of base men, but of the devil, the most miserable creature in the universe. No law could be more strict for the honour of the Adopter than the holy law of God is. And he would by no means overlook it, but magnify it, and make it honourable. What possibility then is there of God's adopting children of the devil in inconsistency with his honour?

Wisdom finds out the way, that is, that they shall be adopted in Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 5, 6. Gal. iii. 26, 27. And to let you see that this way makes it consistent with the honour of God to adopt those that by nature are children of the devil, consider three things in the mystery of Christ.

(1.) By the incarnation of the Son of God, the human nature is dignified and nobilitated, raised to a pitch of honour even above that of the angels, Heb. i. 13. So the Son of God partaking of human nature with the elect, owns them as his brethren, by virtue of their common human nature, Heb. ii, 11, 12. And for this very cause he did become man, ver. 14. which takes away the impediment arising from the meanness of the adopted, it being very agreeable to God's honour to adopt those for children who were of the same nature with his own Son, i. e. of human nature. For the Son of God, to make way for this adoption, took to himself a holy human nature, into personal union with his Godhead, Hence,

(2.) The man Christ is the Elder Brother in the repaired family of heaven, Rom. viii. 29. the first of the human nature having interest in God as a Father, after the extinguishing of the first relation by creation. So that the elect drawing to him, as one betwixt whom and them there is a natural bond, of the same human nature, way is made for their adoption through him, in consistency with the honour of God.

(3.) By his obedience and satisfaction he purchased their adoption, with all other privileges to them, Gal. iv. 4, 5. And his natural bond with them gave him a direct interest to redeem them, as being their near Kinsman. So law and justice can have nothing to object against the adoption. Thus, by Jesus Christ, the glorious device of repairing the family of heaven in the way of Adoption is made practicable. But how shall it be executed? Why,

6. Our Lord sends his messengers, ministers of the gospel, out into the world among those of Satan's family, to proclaim the offer of adoption unto them, that whosoever of them will leave their father's house and people, shall be adopted into the family of heaven. This is offered to them and it is pressed upon them by many arguments and intreaties to accept, and come away. By their mouths the Lord cries to them, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. 'Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' Psal. xlv. 10. 'Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.' They expose the nakedness of their father's house to them. They tell them, that he is a cruel and deceitful father, John viii. 44. that he treats them as slaves, not as sons, 2 Tim. ii. ult. that the entertainment of his house is wretched and beggarly, that they have nothing to eat but dust with the serpent, or husks with the swine; that their work is base, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind; the wages, death; and that he has no inheritance to give them but what will make them eternally miserable. On the other hand, they commend the family of heaven, the Father of the family, the entertainment, the work, wages, inheritance, &c.

Hereupon the father of the family rages, and stirs up the children against them and their message. Sometimes he



raises the family against them, and all that take part with them, and they set upon them violently, and knock them down, and despitefully use them, by persecutions, &c. so that many have lost their lives in the cause, for presuming to disturb that family. When he cannot get that done, he teaches them to stop their ears, that, if they must speak, what they say shall not get access into their hearts, Psal. lviii. 4, 5. And thus the most part of the family get a deafness that abides with them, and grows more and more to their dying day, and they are never cured of it.

7. But unto the elect among them God sends his Spirit, which opens their ears, awakens their conscience, and rouses them so, that they can no longer miss to hear, and understand too, what concerns themselves and both the families, Job xxxvi. 10. And then that makes deep impression on them, which the rest of the family do not at all regard; that makes them wake, while their brethren about them are fast asleep. They see the fire of heaven ready to fall upon the house, see through the murdering designs of their father; they see how they are entertained but with vain hopes, and deluded, in that upper house for a while, till he may get them conveyed into the lower house. And so they set off to come out from among them, and be separate, that they may be received into the family of heaven. But,

8. Then their natural father bestirs himself with all his might to stop their coming out from that family, and that separation. He will set their brethren on them, whereof some will try to mock them from it, others with serpentine wisdom gravely to advise them against the fancy; others, which is most dangerous, to entangle them in the work and entertainment of their father's house. Himself will attack them with flatteries, spread out his baits and allurements of temptation, promise them peace, allow them an indulgence, not to be so hard put to it in his work as before, change their work from the coarser to the finer, represent the family of heaven in base colours, that there is no liberty there, but they are pent up to intolerable strictness, &c. But if that will not do, he will fall on them with rage, and tell them, that there is no room now in the family of heaven for them, that they have been too long among them to come out and be separate now; that they are his, and he will not part with them, and therefore they may give it over. And thus, by

the flatteries or the rage, some are prevailed with to turn back again, and settle down again in their father's house, like Orpah returning to her gods, after she had set off from them, Ruth. i. 15. But,

9. The Spirit of Christ presses forward the elect, and determines them to seek to be received into the family of God, John vi. 45. He is to them a Spirit of light and faith; thereby they discover that there is some hope, concerning their case, that even they may be received into the family. So they are effectually determined to leave their father's house, not to stay there, come of them what will, to come to the Lord and sue for reception, not to depart, if they should die at his door.

10. Hereupon the soul comes away to Christ, the elder brother of the family, and of our nature; and joins himself to him by faith, and is received, John vi. 37. takes hold of the offer of the marriage-covenant, and consents to the spiritual marriage with him who is the Heir of all things, and the Son of God, and so becomes his by a marriage-tie, Cant. ii. 16. The soul drawn by the Spirit to him whose name is the Branch, is put into that branch, being cut off from the natural stock, and knits therewith by faith. Thus the soul is united to Christ, justified, and reconciled to God, and set beyond the reach of the curse.

11. *Lastly*, Upon this follows the adoption of the believer, who now has received and is ingrafted into Christ. John i. 12. Being brought out of the state of condemnation by justification, he is further dignified by a reception as a member into the family of heaven.

(1.) The Lord Jesus presents unto the Father, the Adopter and Judge, the party to be adopted into his family, Heb. ii. 13. as Joseph did Ephraim and Manasseh to Jacob. And he presents him for adoption, as one that, though by nature he be of a strange family, yet is now his own child by the spiritual birth, being born of his Spirit. As an elder brother, he presents the believer as his brother by common human nature; and as the head and husband, presents the soul as his spouse by marriage-covenant. He pleads his purchase of believers by the price of his blood, and their actual relation to him; and that therefore in fulfilment of his Father's decree, they be adopted by him, Eph. i. 5.

(2.) The natural father, the devil, upon the account of

the purchase made of his child by Jesus Christ, and the child's lawful renouncing of his power and family, and coming unto Christ, is obliged to renounce and give up with him, as no member of his family any more, though sore against his will. If he appear in this judgment to defend his own interest, as Satan stood at Joshua's right hand to resist him, Zech. iii. 1. the Mediator stops his mouth, as ver. 2. 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'

(3.) *Lastly*, The Father of our Lord Jesus, for the sake of his Son, receives the believer into the number of his children, saying in effect, As the man Christ and the angel Gabriel, ye are mine, and shall be mine; and as a Judge, he adjudges the believer to be his child, and the relation betwixt him and his natural father extinguished, Isa. xlix. 24, 25. as having purchased them with the blood of his dear Son: and farther gives them a right to the privileges of his sons.

Thus is the glorious benefit brought about, by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the elect soul adopted into the family of heaven. And this consists of two parts.

FIRST, The adopted are received into the number of the sons of God. God becomes a Father to them, and they his sons and daughters. His family consists of many children, each one for holiness and happiness illustrious; all resembling, what indeed they are, the children of a king. They are taken by adoption out of the black number of the devil's family, consisting of devils, damned spirits, and an unconverted world, bearing the devil's image. And they are taken into the blessed number of the sons of God, whereof his family consists. And who are they that make up that number?

1. Jesus Christ the Son of God by eternal generation, who has taken on our nature, and was declared the Son of God by his resurrection, Psal. ii. 7. He is one of the number they are received into, and therefore is not ashamed to call them brethren, Heb. ii. 7. And who can recount the dignity of being of that number, whereof he is one; he who is the brightness of his Father's glory, the luminary of heaven, Rev. xxi. 22. whose splendour is greater than sun and moon? He is the chief of that number, the eldest brother, not only in respect of men, but of angels. To him belongs the dominion, priesthood, the blessing, and the double portion. And it is fit, that while we reckon him one of the number, we



notice well his pre-eminence over all the rest, remembering the dignity of the eldest brother.

(1.) The dominion is his, the supremacy and royalty belongs unto him, and our Father has solemnly invested him therewith, Psal. ii. 6. Though all his brethren are the children of the King, yet he alone is the heir of the crown. On this Lion of the tribe of Judah the kingdom is settled, and the sceptre is given him over all the glorious family of his brethren, who are in number as the sand of the sea, Col. i. 18. Him must all his brethren praise, to him must they bow down, Gen. xlix. 8. Heb. i. 6. The sceptre put into his hand shall never depart.

(2.) The priesthood is his. In him the crown and the mitre both meet together, Zech. vi. 13. 'He shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.' God hath given him an eternal and unchangeable priesthood, confirmed by an oath, Psal. cx. 4. He hath offered his sacrifice, and gone into the holy of holies in heaven with the blood of atonement. He hath redeemed men and confirmed angels, being made their head, Eph. i. 10. Whatever sacrifices we have to offer, God saith of Christ to us, as of Job to his friends, 'Go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept,' chap. xlii. 8. For to him it belongs to offer for the family.

(3.) The blessing is his. Though all the children be blessed, yet the eldest brother had a peculiar blessing allotted to him above all the rest. Therefore said Isaac, 'Thy brother hath taken away thy blessing,' Gen. xxvii. 35. So our Lord Christ hath received the peculiar blessing of his Father, Rom. ix. 5. He is the fountain and storehouse of blessing to all the family. Others receive the blessing in the capacity of a vessel to serve themselves, he in the capacity of a fountain, to shed abroad unto others. And they whom he blesses shall be blessed indeed.

(4.) *Lastly*, The double portion of our Father's goods is his, as that is understood, 2 Kings ii. 9. The greatest fulness that ever any had was never comparable to him, who is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, Psal. xlv. 7. Whatever portion of the Spirit men or angels are partakers of, it is still by a certain measure; but God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, John iii. 34. For the fulness

of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, Col. ii. 9. And accordingly his glory in heaven is without a parallel among his brethren, who shall all be glorious : but they receive and borrow their light from him, he gives it, Rev. xxi. 23.

2. Angels, the sons of God by creation, Job xxxviii. 7. They are of this number, and are an innumerable company of pure, and spotless, and glorious spirits, all sons of the house, with whom the adopted are fellow children of God, Heb. xii. 22. The angelical nature in itself is far more honourable than man's, seeing they are pure spirits, not clogged with bodies, as we are ; therefore says the Psalmist of man, 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, Psal. viii. 5. And they have never been polluted with sin, as we are. Yet they own themselves the brethren of the adopted saints even in this life. Nay, they are content to be ministering spirits to them, even as the grown children of a family are employed to take care of the little children, their brothers and sisters, not capable to take care of themselves, Heb. i. ult.

3. *Lastly*, The saints in heaven and earth, sons of God by regeneration and adoption, Eph. iii. 15. The saints on earth are the excellent upon it, more excellent than their neighbours. And as soon as one is adopted of God, he has them all for brothers and sisters ; and so there is a special love among them, as betwixt the children of one family, 1 John iii. 14. Nay, they are in the same relation to the saints in heaven, and incorporated with them, Heb. xii. 23. Though they are very far above us, yet we are children of God as well as they, as the little ones are as truly of the family as the sons of perfect age ; and as that part of the family that dwells in the lower rooms, as well as those that are advanced to the higher.

This is that glorious number the adopted are received into ; with these they are counted. All these have one and the same Father, God, John xx. 17 ; the same elder brother, Christ ; and do all make up one family, whereof the elder brother is the head, whose head is God.

USE. Sue for this adoption, and for being received into this number ; and for this cause come out from among the world lying in wickedness, and be ye separate. There is a feast before us made for the children. It is a sad token for people never to partake of the childrens' bread, but ever to stand at a distance as strangers to the family : and what con-

cern can there be in the spirits of these for the privileges of God's invisible family, that have no concern for the privileges of his visible family on earth? On the other hand, it is dangerous to intrude among the children, while one is not of the family; to come in among the children of God at the Lord's table, while they are not come out from among the children of Satan.

This adoption is in your offer. Ye that are of the black number this day, may be received into this number so honourable and glorious. If ye believe these things, they cannot but move you to come away, and join yourselves to the household of God.

SECONDLY, They get a right to the privileges of the sons of God. These are great privileges, even agreeable to the dignity of the family they are taken into. I shall lay these before you, to move you to seek to partake of this benefit.

1. A new name, Rev. ii. 17. and iii. 12. God's name is put upon them; and what is that, but, as it is in the text, their old name is for ever laid aside: they are no more called children of the devil, but the sons and daughters of God. They are called of God sons and daughters, Heb. xii. 5. Let the world call them what names of contempt they will, God will call them by most endearing and honourable names, as his treasure, Exod. xix. 5; his jewels, Mal. iii. 17. See the whole Song of Solomon.

2. The Spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15. That is the spirit of the family of heaven, a noble and generous spirit, a spirit of love to God, and confidence in him as a Father. Hereby they are enabled to call God Father, and that is more worth than a thousand worlds. The rest of the world may call him Lord, the hypocrite Master; but the believer may call him Father, at all times, in all the changes of his dispensations; for Abba is a word that, read it backward or forward, is still the same. He disowns others pretences to this, John viii. 41. 44; but he presses it on and teaches it his own, Jer. iii. 4. 'Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father?'

3. Access to God and communion with him. They may come farther in than others, come forward with holy boldness, when others must stand back, Eph. iii. 12. God as a Father is familiar with his children, allows them a holy confidence with him, as children to pour their complaints into



his bosom, and tell him all their wants. And never did a father take so much delight in the talking of his child to him, as God in the prayers of his people poured out, by virtue of the Spirit of adoption, Prov. xv. 8. Cant. ii. 14.

4. Special immunities and freedoms. King's children have great immunities, Matth. xvii. 26. but God's children the greatest of all. While others are condemned men, slaves, servants at best; the children are free. They are freed from the law as a covenant of works, the yoke wreathed about all others necks. Others must work for their living, and must die, if they cannot gain life thereby: but their life is given them without it, as children. They are free from the curse, which is clapt on others, upon every breach of the law, Gal. iii. 10; but their breaches may bring on them a cross, but by no means a curse, ver. 13. They are free from the hurt of every thing in the issue, Luke x. 19; while others are liable to be worsted by the best things, they shall not be so, Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39; but bettered by the worst of things that befall them, ver. 28.

5. God's fatherly love and pity. The little children, while in this world are liable to many infirmities, and he distinguishes their weakness from wickedness and pities them, Psal. ciii. 13. And the elder brother is touched with a feeling of them, Heb. iv. 15. No bowels are so tender and lasting as God's towards his children; no mother so tender of the fruit of her womb as God is of his children, Isa. xlix. 15. When he corrects them, he does it with a fatherly reluctance, Lam. iii. 33. When he gives them a frown or a rough word, his bowels yearn towards them, and their relents go near his heart, Jer. xxxi. 20. His anger is soon over, in comparison of the cloud of wrath that abides on others, though they are ready to look on it as a kind of eternity; but his returning mercies are lasting, Isa. liv. 8. And from this pity many times he spares them, when otherwise they would heavily smart, Mal. iii. 17.

6. Protection, Prov. xiv. 26. They are in danger while they are here, from the devil, the world and the flesh; in danger by temptations to sin, by calamities; but God sets a hedge about them, which neither devils nor their agents can break over, but as he opens a gap by his permission for their trial, Job. i. 10. In all cases they have a Father to run to, both able and willing to protect them, Psal. xc. 1. When

they fall into the hand of their enemies, they are mercifully delivered, and never left with them, Psal. xxxvii. 14. And at length he will set them beyond all danger, Rev. xxi. 25.

7. Provision, 1 Pet. v. 7. He provides for their souls, Psalm lxxxiv. 11. And since he is the God of the whole man, he provides for their bodies too, both food and raiment, Isa. xxxiii. 16. Matth. vi. 30, 32. Come what will, God's children shall be provided for; for he that feeds his birds, the ravens that cry, will not starve his children. Though he will not make provision for their lusts, he will make provision for their necessities, Psal. xxxvii. 3.

8. Seasonable and sanctified correction. What is a proper punishment and a sign of wrath on others, is a privilege to them, Heb. xii. 6. It is a special benefit of the covenant of grace, proceeding from God's fatherly love, Psal. lxxxix. 30,—32. Some smart more for a whorish look after an idol, than others for giving themselves a full swing in their evil way; some more for deadness and indisposition in prayer, than others for neglecting it altogether, &c. For a small fault in a child whose education the father has a peculiar concern for, will be more severely checked than a greater in a stranger.

9. *Lastly*, An inheritance and portion, according to their Father's quality. They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 17. So all is theirs, grace and glory. Their portion will never fail, but tell out through eternity, when the portion of worldly men shall be at an end, 1 Pet. i. 4. Their Father gives them of his moveables, as he sees meet; but their inheritance is not moveable, Heb. xii. 28.

THIRDLY, The next thing is to shew the properties of this adoption.

1. It is a precious and costly relation. There was a price, a great one, paid to instate the sinner in this privilege. What the chief captain said to Paul in another case, 'With a great sum obtained I this freedom,' Acts xxii. 28. a child of God may say concerning himself, though he paid not that sum himself, Gal. iv. 4, 5. The Son of God, Christ, bought them by his obedience and death. That is the price of our adoption.

2. It is a high and honourable one, John i. 12. As low as we naturally are, adopting grace raiseth us to the highest pitch of honour we are capable of; to be brethren of angels,

yea, of Christ, and the children of God. ‘Seemeth it a small thing to you to be son-in-law to a king?’ said David; but how much more to be the sons and daughters of the King of heaven.

3. It is freely bestowed, Eph. i. 5. There is nothing in the adopted naturally, more than in the rest of their natural father’s house, to move God to pitch on them rather than others, so that it is free grace merely that makes the difference. Neither birth, nor beauty, nor parts, can be here alleged, Ezek. xvi. Neither was it from indigence, as among men, that God adopted any of the children of men, but from his own bountiful nature: not to bring any additional pleasure or comfort to himself, for he needs none, but to make them partakers of his goodness.

4. *Lastly*, It is a never-failing relation. Once a child of God, ever so, 1 John viii. 35. If a child wander from his father’s house, he will be sought and brought back again; so the children of God shall persevere in the state of grace. A servant of the house of heaven may be turned out of doors, and quite leave their master, 2 Pet. ii. 1. yea, a natural son may also perish or be lost. So Adam was turned out, so the fallen angels never recovered. But God’s adopted children can never fall totally away, Psal. lxxxix. 30,—34.

USE I. Of information. Is adoption into God’s family the peculiar privilege of those that are effectually called? Then,

1. The gospel-calling is the highest calling men are capable of, Phil. iii. 14. It calls men to the dignity of the sons of God. And they that undervalue it shew themselves sons of earth, that know not the things of God. It might draw tears of pity from the eyes God has enlightened, to think how the gospel-call is slighted, as idle tales, how men value themselves on trifles and baubles of this world, and think the compliance with the gospel-call a vain thing: and all this by men whose eyes the god of this world has blinded, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. who trample on the pearl, because they know not the value of it.

2. The unconverted man is of Satan’s family still, a child of the devil, for he is not adopted into God’s family, John viii. 44. Many a gospel-call has sounded in your ears, sinner, hast thou not come away on the call? then thou art yet a child of the devil, Acts xiii. 10: and therefore an heir of



hell and of wrath. Perhaps thou wilt not believe this, and never couldst : but that is agreeable enough to the blindness of the children of the family of darkness, Rev. iii. 17. Whose image dost thou bear ? Holiness is God's image, unholiness the devil's. Thy dark heart and unholy life plainly tell the family thou art of.

3. The unconverted man has no right before the Lord to sit down at the Lord's table. It is children's bread, and not to be cast to the dogs, Matt. xv. 26. It is true, men that make a credible profession of their repentance have a right before the church ; for of the heart in that case men cannot judge. But a token from an angel will not bear out a child of the devil, at God's table before the Lord. God makes this feast for his children ; and if God had not children to feed here, it would not be prepared : but wo to those that come in among them, not having sincerely forsaken their natural father's house, and their own people. Will he welcome the children of his grand enemy among his own ? No sure. Therefore first comply with the gospel-call, ' Come out from among them, and be ye separate.' Come to Christ, that ye may be entered into God's family by adoption, and then come to his table.

4. Compliance with the gospel-call brings with it a right to the table of the Lord. This do, and ye shall be adopted into his family, and have a right to the privileges thereof. This answers the question, How may we be fitted for the Lord's table ? The gospel calls you to come away, forget your own people, and your father's house, the entertainment, work, and business thereof. Give up with all your lusts and idols, receive Christ for your Prophet, Priest, and King ; enter into the covenant sincerely. And Christ's Father shall be your Father, and then ye shall be fitted to come to his table, and have the children's portion.

5. A true Christian is more excellent than his neighbour, Prov. xii. 26. A godly man is more preferable to a wicked man, than a king's son is to the son of a slave, though in external things the latter may have the pre-eminence. A saint in rags is a child of God, while the wicked laded with honours and wealth is a child of the devil. The former has privileges as far above those of the other, as the heavens are above the earth. O ! if this were believed, people would

more eagerly pursue after grace than gold, and seek the state of grace more than all the world can afford.

6. See hence the spring of the hatred of the world against the people of God, that has vented itself in all the abuses they have met with from the wicked. They are of opposite families, that will never agree, John xv. 19. Hence it is that the love of the brethren is made a sign of a child of God, 1 John iii. 14. And to be haters and despisers of them, is a black mark. But look abroad through the world, and ye will see, that if there be persons who hate to be restrained, but can take a latitude to themselves, these are the men. But as for others, that dare not go into the same excess of riot, who tremble at the Lord's word, and carry at a distance from the appearance of evil, these are ready to be maligned, mocked, and despised, as men of no spirit, because not of the spirit of the devil's family. Nay, not only is the world's contempt and spite against the children, but against the very servants, whom the world despise oft-times for no other reason, but because they are servants, and concerned in the church, which is God's family on earth. Unlike the disposition of God's children, Psal. lxxxiv. 10. who say, 'A day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.'

7. *Lastly*, The people of God are brethren, and should live together in peace and unity and love, as brethren. O how unnatural are the jarrings and discords among those that profess to be of the same family of heaven! Our heavenly Father setting his children on their way home together, says, as Joseph said to his brethren, 'See that ye fall not out by the way.' Gen. xlv. 24. Lay by all feuds and discords among yourselves, forgive as ye would be forgiven. And especially I warn all against approaching to the table of the Lord, in the leaven of bitterness, malice, and revenge, keeping up their quarrels. It is a feast for the children of the family, sealing our communion with one another; a seal of the pardon of sin, and reconciliation with God, which we cannot have unless we forgive others from the heart, Mat. vi. 15. Therefore remember, that 'if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and

go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,' chap. v. 23, 24.

USE II. Try whether ye be the children of God, adopted into God's family or not. To quicken you hereto, consider,

*Mot.* 1. Ye were born children of the devil's family; he was your natural father, and there is no middle state betwixt the two families. Still ye belong either to the one or the other. Does it not concern you then to search which of the two ye are now of; whether ye be come out from among them, or are still living with them, among whom ye were born?

2. This matter is of the greatest weight. Upon the one hand, are the most excellent privileges, which it is sad to lose; and on the other, the most dreadful disadvantages, which it is terrible to lie under. They differ as heaven and hell; and indeed your eternal state turns upon this point. If ye be children of God, heaven shall be your mansion; if not, hell your everlasting abode.

3. Many deceive themselves in this point. They call God Father, whom he will never own for his children, John viii. 41, 44. They look for the privileges of his children, who will be disowned, as children of Satan. And O what a terrible surprise will that be, to be cast down from the highest hopes to the lowest pitch of despair!

4. *Lastly*, This trial is at all times necessary, but especially on occasion of the sacrament, 1 Cor. xi. 28. 'Wherefore let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.' To clear this, is to clear your right to that holy ordinance. The children whom God has taken into his family by adoption, he has prepared that table for, and for none else. Others are debarred as none of his family, but of the family of Satan. They are bid welcome as his own children, for whose nourishment, growth, and comfort, he has prepared it. Ye may know this by the following marks.

*Mark* 1. The image ye bear. Children are like their father, and all God's children father themselves. I allude to Judges viii. 18. They each one resemble the children of a king. Look to thy own soul, and say as Christ of the tribute-money, 'Whose image and superscription is this?' The image of God may shine more brightly in one than



another, in one person at one time more than another ; but his image is on all his children, 2 Cor. iii. 18. If thou bearest his image, thou wilt be like him.

1. In the head, for there will be spiritual and saving knowledge, Col. iii. 10. He is ‘ the Father of lights,’ and his children are ‘ children of light,’ Eph. v. 8. Ye that are yet living in your natural darkness, with whom there has been no morning to put an end to the darkness of a natural state, are yet of the family of Satan ; and particularly grossly ignorant ones are so, Isa. xxvii. 11. For though some of God’s children may not be book-learned, they are all Spirit-learned, John vi. 45. But if God has enlightened your darkness and ye are renewed in knowledge, it is a good sign if ye are let into the knowledge of God and spiritual things, by the working of the Spirit of the Lord on you.

It is true, there is a false light, and a vain knowledge of spiritual things, even in the devil’s family ; but saving knowledge is, (1.) Solid and humbling, Job xlii. 5, 6 ; and the more a man has of it, he is the more vile in his own eyes : the other is airy and windy, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Knowledge puffeth up, and makes a man think himself something, when he is nothing. (2.) Lively and sanctifying, John xiii. 17. When the Spirit came on the primitive Church, Acts ii. 3. there appeared tongues like fire : so true knowledge has a heat with it, to burn up known sin, and to burn toward known duty. They know and desire to know, in order to practise. The other is a sort of wild fire, that has light with it, but no heat ; meet enough to lead people to the pit, where there is a burning heat but no light, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Unholy ministers and professors, that have knowledge, they are like gentlemen skilled in architecture ; all the use they have for it, is to tell how a house should be built, and draw the draughts, but they never lay a stone. The child of God is like the mason that learns the trade, to the end he may work in it daily. The former may have more of the theory than the latter, and can talk more rationally about it ; but they are not called masons : the latter have more of the practice, so the name is theirs. Even so in spirituals, men not enlightened in the knowledge of God, so as to practise it in works of holiness, are not called of God Christians. (3.) *Lastly*, Experimental and savoury, Phil. iii. 9. The child of God feels the power of truth on his soul. He sees the glory of

Christ and religion, and he loves them, and is touched with the overcoming beauty. He feels the ill of sin, and he is put in horror with the deformity of it, 1 Peter ii. 3. The other is speculative, unfelt, untried, 1 Cor. xiii. 1.—3. They speak of religion as a parrot, without the sense or knowledge of the things themselves, as a man does of war that was never at a battle, or one of sweet spices that he never saw, 1 Tim. i. 7.

2. In heart. Children readily partake of the disposition of their parents; so that as they are like them in the face, they are like them in their manners too. The child of God gets a new heart, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. So righteousness and holiness are parts of the image of God, Eph. iv. 24. Every child of God is in some measure like David, a man after God's own heart. The heart that was bent to evil, gets a set to the right side; the heart that was enmity against God, is turned to him. So that the soul loves what God loves, hates what he hates, sorrows for what grieves his Spirit, rejoices in what is acceptable to him. These are the upright and pure in heart in a gospel sense, Matth. v. 8.

But some will say, Well, I keep always a good heart to God. Others, Alas! the heart is the worst bit in me, where I can see the least likeness to God. *Ans.* Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. The heart is both the best and worst bit in man. The best, Prov. iv. 23; the worst, Jer. xvii. 9. And therefore I conclude, that the former sort are none of the children of God, because they are blind, and mistake the worst part of them for the best, the chambers of imagery for the temple of God, Rev. iii. 17. Prov. xxx. 12. The latter sort may be God's children; for that which makes the heart to be both the best and worst part, is, that in every heart of God's family on earth, there is a renewed part, the spirit; and an unrenewed part, the flesh, Gal. v. 17; the one the best part, the other the worst. So that this holds of the children of God; for the best part of an unrenewed man is his life, be it never so bad, his heart is always worse, as the fountain is worse than the stream, Mark vii. 21. Now, the child of God, looking on the unrenewed part of the heart, sees the worst bit in him: but if he look to the renewed part, it is the best for all that, better than his life, Psal. xlv. 13; be it never so good, Matth. xxvi. 41.

The heart of a child of God is a roomy house; and grace

and corruption in that heart are like two flitters, one going out of the house, the other coming into it. The outgoing tenant is loath to leave the house, makes no speed to lift his plenishing, but as the incomer lifts it for him to make room for his own. So here lies the one's furniture, there the other's in and about the same house. Even so God's good things that he has in a saint, and the devil's evil things that he has in him, are both to be found in the house of the heart, and standing about the door in the life. In the heart of a child of God, upon the one hand lies God's plenishing, faith, humility, meekness, &c. on the other, Satan's, unbelief, pride, passion, &c.; with this difference, that the latter is nearest the door, and all lifted out of their place, which they sometimes stood in, when they had the house there alone.

But what is the differencing mark here of a heart on which God's likeness is, is, that the law of God is written on that heart, Heb. viii. 10. This is the peculiar privilege of a child of God. And it speaks three things.

(1.) A heart-approbation of the law. The law of God is holy and pure, condemning all impurity wherever it is found. But a child of God heartily approves of it, for all that it strikes against his most beloved idols. He approves of it in his judgment, as just and righteous; and not only so, but in his practical judgment, as good as well as just, Rom. vii. 12; which evidences the natural enmity to be broken, and the heart new moulded, Rom. viii. 7.

(2.) A heart-inclination to the holy law. There is a principle within the man lying the same way with the law, and bending towards what it directs to, and away from what it forbids, Rom. vii. 22. And though there be a contrary principle to this, which thwarts and crosses it, yet the child of God takes part with the former against the latter, and is striving and longing to be rid of it, Rom. vii. 24. This is the new set of the heart, given in the new birth, consisting not in bare wishes to be conformed to that law, but in a resolute bent of the heart for it, which will never leave its struggling, till it overcome at last. And,

(3.) An universality in both, Psal. cxix. 6. It is not some shreds and pieces of the law that the heart approves of and inclines to, but the whole law, in every part thereof to them known, ver. 128. The holy law in all the parts thereof is a copy of the holy divine nature, and it is transcribed into the



heart of the child of God, in so far as there are gracious inclinations wrought in the soul answerable to the several points of the law, as the wax bears the impress of the seal, John i. 16. So that try the child of God in his weakest side, this approbation and inclination will be found, Psal. xviii. 23.

3. In their walk, Eph. v. 1. As children follow their father's footsteps, the children of God follow their heavenly Father. We have had the way of our Father, God, chalked out to us in the way our Lord took, and we must prove our sonship by following his steps, 1 John ii. 6. He walked in the way of humility, meekness, self-denial, and heavenly-mindedness: and if we be following his steps in sincerity, conscientiously aiming at these things, it is an evidence we are the children of God.

Particularly, the way of love to men was a notable road of his, which we must follow, Eph. v. 2. A spirit of bitterness, fieryness, and selfishness, whatever men profess, is a black mark, it is so very unlike Christ's way. And altho' the loving and seeking the good of our friends is so very rare in the world, and people generally make no bones of returning evil for evil, nay, many times working mischief to them that never wronged them; yet the loving of our enemies, as Christ loved his, and doing them good as we have opportunity, is absolutely necessary to evidence us to be the children of God, Matth. v. 44, 45.

*Mark 2.* By your affections to the family of God. A child of God has child-like affections to the family of heaven.—Nature teaches us a special affection to our relations: and the new nature and state teaches the same to the heavenly family, betwixt whom there is a spiritual bond. Try the pulse of your affections, thereby to see your state.

1. A child of God has a child-like love and affection to God as his Father, and to Christ as his Elder Brother. This is a sure mark, 1 John iv. 19. They bear a superlative, transcendent love to God and Christ, loving him above all persons, and all things. He is dearer to them than lawful or unlawful enjoyments, Psal. lxxiii. 25. And this love will manifest itself.

(1.) In honouring him as a Father, Mal. i. 6. A child of God has an honour for him, which the rest of the world have not. He sees a glory, loveliness, and majesty in him above all other, 1 Pet. ii. 7. which produces a love mixed

with reverence, that makes up the child-like disposition.—These are separated in others. The presumptuous hypocrite seems to have a love to him, but they want reverence, and their pretended familiarity breeds contempt. The unrenowned heart, under convictions of sin and duty, has a slavish fear of him, but no love to him. But the child of God has love mixed with reverence.

(2.) A conscientious obedience to his commands, 1 John v. 3. The father's command is a sufficient bond of obedience on a kindly child; and so is God's on those that are his.—It is lamentable to think of the horrid untenderness and woful latitude that many take to themselves, whose conscience can witness, that God's command, though known, has not the weight of a feather on their consciences, in many things; especially where their own interest is concerned, or in things that are thought light of by the world. But a child of God has weighty thoughts of God's authority, smiles, and frowns, and will rather venture the displeasing of any than his Father.

3. In submitting to his chastisements, Micah vii. 9. 'I bear the indignation of the Lord,' says the prophet, 'because I have sinned against him.' It is the disposition of a child of God, to justify God under the rebukes of providence, to condemn himself, and turn to the hand that smiteth.

(4.) In his absence from them, and displeasure against them, it is the disposition of a child of God, (1.) To take his absence heavily; so the spouse is heart-sick when her beloved is gone, a thing that many are very little acquainted with, Cant. v. 8. (2.) To justify him in his withdrawals; the soul leaves its complaint on itself, Psal. xxii. 1, 3. (3.) To long for his return and countenance, with a holy impatience, as Sisera's mother, Judges v. 28. 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot?' Psal. lxxiii. 1. 'O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.' (4.) To take rest in nothing while he hides his face. Worldly comforts, yea, gospel-ordinances, are sapless without him. Still they say with Job, 'O that I knew where I might find him!' Job xxiii. 3. *Lastly*, To use all endeavours to find him, as the spouse did, Cant. v.

(5.) *Lastly*, In his presence with them, and the outlettings of himself to them. (1.) To be well content in the enjoyment of himself instead of all things, Psal. iv. 6, 7. (2.) To be inflamed with love to him, Luke xxiv. 32. (3.) To be desiring more and more of his presence, Cant. viii. 6. (4.) To like well the full enjoyment in heaven, Phil. i. 23. (5.) To be loath to part, Cant. iii. 5.

And to clear yet more this mark of love to God,

[1.] It is love to God for himself; not only for what he has to give us, as the hypocrite's servile love is; but also for what he is in himself, Psal. xlv. 2. 'Thou art fairer than the sons of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever, Psal. lxxiii. 25. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee.' They love him in all his perfections, particularly for his holiness and spotless purity, Psal. xcvi. 12. 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.'

[2.] They love what is his for his sake. His stamp and image on any thing makes it lovely to them, Psal. xxvi. 8. 'Lord,' says David, 'I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.' Hence they love his truths, ordinances, and people. Which brings to a second particular.

2. He has a love to the brethren of the family, 1 John iii. 14. For clearing of this mark, consider,

(1.) It is a love to them as such, for the image of God appearing in them. When we love the godly for their godliness, the saints for their sanctity, we love God in them, and so may conclude, 'that every one that loveth him that begeth, loveth him also that is begotten of him,' 1 John v. 1. Hypocrites may love saints, because of natural relation to them, their obliging conversation, their being of their way or opinion, and the like: but happy those who love them for naked grace in them, that pick the pearl out of the dunghill of many displeasing things about them, and kindly love them for that.

1. It is an universal love, to all the saints, Eph. i. 15. A child of God will love all who to his discerning bear God's image: not only the saints in gay clothing, but going in rags; not only those that are of our way, but of whatever party they be, if they agree with him in bearing God's image.

(3.) *Lastly*, The more grace any have, they will have the



more of the love of the child of God. The more like our heavenly Father, the more we will love them, since that likeness is the cause of the love.

*Mark ult.* By your spirit. A child of God has the spirit of the family of heaven; the Spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15. Now, the Spirit of adoption is,

1. A Spirit of prayer, *ib.* This casts all prayerless persons that are come to years of discretion, as none of God's children. As it also casts all those, who, though they have a gift of prayer, and use it too, yet are strangers to the Spirit of prayer. Now, the spirit of prayer makes spiritual worship, John iv. 24.; that is, by the Spirit he is helped to praying affections, seeking the enjoyment of God himself in the duty, and has his love, faith, humility, dependence on the Lord's word through Christ, his sense of wants, sincere desire of supply, &c. stirred up in him by the Spirit, Rom. viii. 26.

2. A spirit of liberty, not of bondage, *ib.* The Spirit of adoption carries a man out from the influence of the covenant of works, so that he does not serve God as a slave, merely or mainly for fear of punishment, or hope of reward; but as a son does a father, out of love.

3. *Lastly*, A noble spirit, that raiseth a man's thoughts, aims, and designs, beyond the little mean things of this world; making him resolute for the enjoyment of God at any rate, and the land that is afar off, Num. xiv. 24. Those that are of noble families scorn to pursue the mean designs of the inferior sort, having a spirit suitable to their quality.—None are of such a noble extract as the saints are, by their new state: and their spirit is in some measure agreeable thereto.

II. I proceed to the second branch of the doctrine, which is, 'Whosoever will comply with the gospel-call, shall be adopted into God's family. God will be their Father, and they shall be his sons and daughters.'

Here I shall shew,

1. What is the call of the gospel, on compliance with which men shall be adopted into God's family.

2. Confirm the doctrine.

3. Lay before you further the nature of this relation to the family of heaven.

4. Apply the subject.

FIRST, I shall show what is the call of the gospel, on compliance with which we shall be adopted into the family of God. It consists of two parts. It is a call,

1. To leave the devil's family : ' Come out from among them,' Psal. xlv. 10. Come away from the family ye were born in: leave your natural father, his house, work, and way. Sinners, ye have remained too long at home. Repent now, and be converted. Give up with your old way of sin and sloth : bestir yourselves like true Israelites, and come forth from the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage, from the iron furnace. This is the gospel-call to you.

2. To come away to Jesus Christ, the head of the blessed society, and so put yourselves into the family of heaven, Matth. xi. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 4. A father, a master, ye must have ; and ye are called to change fathers and masters, to take the Lord himself instead of Satan. Join yourselves to the Lord in the covenant of grace. Offer yourselves into the family of heaven, and for that cause accept the offer of the elder brother of that family, taking him for your all, in all his offices. He is saying to you as he did to the spouse, Cant. iv. 8. ' Come with me from Lebanon,' &c. He offers to introduce you into his Father's house and family, and to get you admitted among the children.

SECONDLY; I shall confirm this doctrine, ' That whosoever will comply with the gospel-call, shall be adopted into God's family.'

1. This is the plain gospel-promise, held out to sinners to engage them to come away, as in the text expressly. It is the Lord's own word, who is truth itself, and whose deeds of mercy and grace are always equal to his word ; and ye may with all security venture on it. And it is no more than what was prophesied before to be the effect of the preaching of the gospel, among those that comply with it, Hos. i. 10.—' Ye are the sons of the living God.'

2. All that have complied, and come away, have met with no worse entertainment, than the promise put them in hope of, John i. 12. ' To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' They were of sundry sorts that received him, some high, some low, some of the greatest sinners, that were grown sinners in the devil's family. But they all met with this entertainment. The apostle John, 1 Epist. iii. 1. speaks of this honour as common

to all that have believed. And the entertainment they have got before us, was designed for the encouraging of those in after generations to come away, Eph. ii. 7.

3. This was the very end and design of the incarnation of the Son of God, his obedience, death, and sufferings, to bring in sinners as children into his Father's family, John xi. 51, 52. The repairing of the breach made therein by the fall of angels and men, was laid upon him, as the fittest person: forasmuch as he was by nature the Son of God, he was the fittest to make others sons by grace. Hence he is represented,

(1.) As the first born among many brethren, a first-born in a positive sense, whom other sons were to follow, Rom. viii. 29. The man Christ was designed to be God's first-born; and therefore there must of necessity be other men to be his brethren, as children of the same family. Else where is his pre-eminence, dominion, priesthood, &c. if there be no brethren added to him? Now these must be of men taken out of the devil's family, or not at all; for there are none other of Adam's posterity, whose nature he took.

(2.) As a Captain upon the head of the children bringing them home to their Father's house, Heb. ii. 10. The glory the saints receive at last, is given them as children and heirs, Matth. xxv. 34. And Christ is appointed the Captain of those heirs of glory, leading them to their inheritance. Now, these must draw to his standard out of Satan's family, and list themselves under his banner, his army being gathered together by the gospel.

(3.) As one lowering himself to exalt our nature, that we might be capable of adoption into his Father's family, Heb. ii. 14. For this cause he took our nature into personal union with his divine nature, that the meanness of the adopted might not be such as to stain the honour of the Adopter.—And now, since the Son of God is also the Son of man, the way is opened for the children of men to become the children of God.

(4.) *Lastly*, As travailing and bringing forth children unto God. Christ's death-pains were birth-pangs, Acts ii. 24.—Well may he call believers *Benoni* and *Naphtali*; for his pangs for bringing forth these children put him to strong crying and tears, Heb. v. 7; into an agony and bloody sweat, Luke xxii. 44; and in the end he died of them. But only



they were not in vain, he will have issue by all his labour and toil, as that word signifies, Isa. liii. 11. ‘He shall see of the travail of his soul.’

What ground then remains to doubt of this adoption, which Christ has been so employed for, and upon which so much of his honour depends?

4. The design of the ministry of the gospel is to bring sinners out of Satan’s family into God’s by adoption. And therefore they are sent out with that message in the name of the Lord, 2 Cor. vi. 17. ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.’ They are sent to travel betwixt the two families, and persuade sinners to forget their father’s house. The Lord does not send out his ambassadors to mock you, but as really as the word of God is truth, if ye comply with their call, ye shall be God’s sons and daughters.

5. *Lastly*, Whosoever shall comply with the gospel-call shall be espoused and married to Christ, and therefore cannot miss to be a child of his Father’s family, Hos. ii. 19. The gospel-call is the carrying on of a treaty betwixt the elder brother of the house of heaven and a child of the house of hell. It is offered to all to whom the gospel comes, and to you in particular, amongst whom the feast of the espousals is providing, Matth. xxii. 4. It is his Father’s good will that this match be made. And therefore whom Christ takes for his spouse, the Father will never refuse for a child of his family.

THIRDLY, I will lay before you farther the nature of this relation unto the family of heaven. The text tells us, that the issue of this adoption is, that God will be a Father to the adopted, and they his children. Now, this may be considered in two respects. (1.) In point of privilege, and this privilege is exceeding great; but of that we have spoke already. (2) In point of duty, which the privilege brings along with it; and that I will now lay before you. If ye mind to join yourselves to the family of heaven, remember ye are to be there under the character of sons and daughters of the house, and must resolve to carry yourselves as such; otherwise ye do but mock God, and will ruin your own souls. Lay then your account with this, that God must be a Father to you, and ye his sons and daughters. And this in point of duty implies.

1. Ye must join interests with God’s family. As the fa-

ther's interest is the interest of all the children, so God's interest must be yours, on all hazards, Matth. xvi. 24. 'If any man will come after me (says Christ), let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.' There is a continued battle betwixt Christ and his angels, and the devil and his; the peace will never be made. Now chuse what side you will fall in with. Christ is carrying all the family of God on earth away to heaven, in the ship of the covenant, with a design to weather all the storms they may meet with by the way; never to yield to go back to the devil's ground. Are ye content to embark with him on these terms? If so, then say now as Ruth did to Naomi, Ruth i. 16. 'Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.' If not, better not to put your hand to the plough, than look back.

2. God must command, and ye must obey without disputing of your Father's orders. God says to children, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right,' Eph. vi. 1. 'Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord,' Col. iii. 20. The same are the laws of the family of heaven, 1 Pet. i. 14. 'As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts, in your ignorance.' If ye will come in here, leave your own corrupt will behind you, for your Father's will must be yours, Psal. xlv. 10. and ye must resolve to submit to all the laws of the house. If there be therefore any known duty ye have no mind to comply with, or known sin ye have no mind to part with, venture not in among the children, for ye cannot have the portion or welcome of a child.

3. Ye must give him internal as well as external obedience. Filial affections are due to a father; love, reverence, delight in him, and fear to offend him, Rom. viii. 15. A slave or servant will give God the hand, when they do not give him the heart. But if thou be a son, thou must have child-like affections towards him. If thou hast no heart for him, no kindly zeal and concern on thy spirit to please him, thou canst be no child of his. And if thou dost not mind to ply internal as well as external obedience, thou art not for that family.

4. Ye must resolve to imitate your Father, Eph. v. 1. 'Be followers of God, as dear children.' Conform yourselves no more to the world, to follow the way of the multitude, Rom. xii. 2. but set yourselves to write after Christ's copy, to follow his example, and to 'walk as he walked,' 1 John ii. 6. for 'he has left us an example that we should follow his steps.' Consider if ye be so minded, ye are welcome to the children's table; if not, ye are not fit to come there.

5. Ye and your lot must be at God's disposal, Psal. xlvii. 4. Ye must take what place, and act what part, in the family the Father shall think meet to dispose of you to. The soul that comes to Christ lays his all down at the Lord's feet, Acts ix. 6; and if ye mind to come into the family, lay your account with this; for God will not allow his children to carve for themselves, but leave that to him.

6. Ye must submit to correction, Heb. xii. 6, 7. The discipline of the house they must submit to who will come into it. The cross ye must be content to take up, if ever ye mind to put on the crown. Lay your account with the ill-day's cross, and the holy-day's cross: for all the children of God are brought up under it. And they that will refuse the cross, will refuse their part in the family of heaven, since there is no part there without it.

7. *Lastly*, Ye must resolve to persevere to the end, John viii. 35. Ye must take an everlasting farewell of Satan's family, never to go back to your former lusts and idols; but to be the Lord's only, wholly, and for evermore. Never enter the threshold of the house unless ye mind to stay for ever. Be contented to have your ears nailed to the door-posts; for God has said, 'If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him,' Heb. x. 38.

*Use*, Of exhortation. Comply with the gospel-call. Come to Christ out from among them, and partake of this adoption into God's family. Now ye may have God to be your Father, and ye may be his children. Secure this blessed bargain for yourselves now; and put a close to that transaction by sincerely closing with Christ, and giving up yourselves wholly to be the Lord's. I offer the following motives.

*Mot.* 1. Consider the wretched case of the family thou art of. Whilst thou art not a child of God, thou art a member



of Satan's family, John viii. 44; and they are a miserable society. They are miserable now, and will be miserable for evermore; for God has sworn that he will have war with them for ever. See the great stroke that will be the decisive one. Matth. xxv. 41. 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Every unconverted man and woman is a child of wrath; that is their heritage from the Lord, which will make judgment their food, and everlasting sorrow their bed. None of them have a garment to cover their nakedness, nor wherewith to pay their debt to divine justice, so wretchedly poor are they; and therefore Christ says, 'Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear,' Rev. iii. 18.

*Mot. 2.* Consider what a Father God will be to you, the best of fathers. No children are so happy as God's children are.

1. The most honourable Father; he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And there are none whose eyes God has opened, but they will value this adoption more than all the fading honours of a world, 1 John iii. 1. Moses preferred it to being the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Heb. xi. 24, 25.

2. The most loving and compassionate Father. It goes beyond the love of fathers and mothers too to their sucking children, Isa. xlix. 15, 16. 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.' What father's love would have made him to do what he has done for his children, even when they were enemies? John iii. 16. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

3. The most helpful Father, he is able to help in all cases that his children can be in. Are they pursued? he has a refuge for them. Whatever they want, he can give them, for all is his. And if they be held at short commons at any time, it is because he sees it is best for them. When death comes, and neither father nor mother can help, he can; as

Psalm xlviii. ult. 'For this God is our God for ever and ever : he will be our guide even unto death.'

4. The richest Father, that has the best inheritance to give to his children, 'an inheritance incorrupted and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,' 1 Pet i. 4. He has prepared for them a better country, a glorious city, a palace for their mansion-place ; richest treasures of glory. And all these are such as shall never go from them, nor they from them.

5. The wisest Father, 'God only wise.' He is one to whose disposal one may securely resign himself absolutely. He cannot be mistaken in his measures for his children's welfare ; and he ever seeks it.

6. *Lastly*, His children have the best attendants, in their life, Heb. i. ult. 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?' and at their death, angels to convoy them to Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22. Yea, himself is ever with them in life and in death, till he bring them where they shall be beyond hazard, Psal. xxiii. 4. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'

*Mot.* 3. Consider the mighty price paid for the redemption of sinners, to make way for them into God's family, Gal. iv. 4, 5. 'When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' There was no hope of this till the Son of God undertook the work of redemption. And by his precious blood he purchased it for us. O! trample not on the price and purchase of blood.

*Mot.* 4. Consider what a wonderful thing it is, that there is a possibility of it, that children of Satan may become the children of God. Whoso considers their own vileness and God's greatness, must cry out with wonder, 'Is this the manner of men!'

*Mot.* ult. It is this day in your offer. The Lord says to you, even to all of you, as in the text, *I will be a Father unto you*, &c. And ye may have it, and have it sealed to you. But it will not always be so. The day of grace will come to an end.

*Case* 1. But will ever God set such a sinful and vile wretch as me among his children? *Ans.* Yes, if ye make not your-

selves more vile, by rejecting of Jesus Christ. I know nothing can hinder you from adoption, but that, John iii. 19. 'And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' The greatness of your sin will not do it, Isa. i. 18. 'Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' The multitude of them, Isa. lv. 7. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' Your frequent backslidings, Jer. iii. 1, 4. 'They say, if a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?' Come to Christ, unite with him by faith, in the way of the covenant, and God will pardon and adopt you.

Case 2. But I fear I never will be able to carry as a child of God. *Ans.* Is it thy sincere purpose to labour to conform thyself to the manners of God's house? then he bids thee welcome into his family. He can do for his children, what no other father can do, even transform them into his own image and likeness, and preserve them by his mighty power through faith unto salvation.

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THE DIVINE CALL TO LEAVE THE DEVIL'S FAMILY, EXPLAINED  
AND URGED \*.

2 COR. vi. 17, 18.—*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

**T**HE sacred feast before us the Lord makes for his own children in the lower house, and for them only. His

\* This discourse was preached at Ettrick, June 8, 1718, immediately before the celebration of the Lord's Supper.



children that are above need it not. The children of the devil, which all in the state of nature are, will not get the welcome of the Master of the feast to it, for he has made it only for those of his own family. But there is another family that bears the greatest bulk in the world, and that is Satan's: and all the world belongs to one of the two. The apostle tells us there can be no communion or agreement betwixt these two families, ver. 14, 15, 16. But God making up his family of such as are brought out of Satan's, the gospel is sent into the world to invite sinners to desert their natural father's house, promising them thereupon a kindly reception into the family of God, both which we have in the text. Wherein is,

1. The gospel-call to sinners. And that is to come out from among them, &c. And here is,

(1.) The substance of the duty, *Come out from among them*. This black society, which ye are called to come out of, is that of unbelievers, unrighteousness, darkness, idolaters, headed by Belial, the devil; that is, in a word, the world lying in wickedness; all the unconverted world, which the text and context represents as the devil's family, to which the family of God is opposed. To *come out from among them*, is to come out of your natural state, to renounce the devil, the world, and sin, and to come to Christ by faith. And that the text aims at no less than this, (tho' it is pertinently enough applied to renouncing external visible church-communion with idolaters), I think it is evident from this, that adoption into God's family is proposed and promised on compliance with this call, ver. 18. And let men separate as they will, till they make this holy separation, that they can never have.

(2.) The manner of the duty. [1.] Ye must come away freely, and for altogether: *Be ye separate*. A withdrawing for a time while the relation stands betwixt you and them, will not do; there must be a total separation, by going to the contrary side, and setting up in opposition to them: *Be ye separate*. Thus the apostle explains, Isa. lii. 11. whence this is taken. [2.] Ye must come away cleanly and honestly, taking up nothing of theirs to carry away with you, as Rachael did her father's images: *Touch not the unclean thing*. Thus God himself calls you away: *Saith the Lord*.

2. The gospel-offer and promise, on compliance with the call, *I will receive you*. I will take you in, viz. into my

house and family ; namely, as children by adoption, having left your natural Father, the devil. Compare ver. 18. which we explained before.

I observe from the words the following doctrine, viz.

DOCT. ' The Lord calls to sinners to come freely and cleanly away out of the devil's family, promising thereupon to take them into his own family, as children of his house by adoption.'

Having at large explained the doctrine of the divine adoption from ver. 18. and applied it in the way of trial, I have chosen further to pursue that design, in a way of exhortation, in the words of this text. To prepare which for application, I shall only,

I. Shew you a few things implied in this call.

II. What this coming out from among them is.

I. I shall shew you a few things implied in this call.

1. Sinners naturally are of the devil's family, John viii. 44. Ye are in among them, else there were no need of coming out from among them. The family of Satan consists of devils, damned spirits of men, and all the unconverted world lying in wickedness ; in a word, of all those that are not of the family of God. All these are under one head, the prince of devils. And accordingly, when time is at an end, they shall all be housed under one dreadful roof for ever, Matth. xxv. 41. O ! unconverted sinner, thou art a son of the house of hell, (what ever blood run in thy veins), a prison-house, a dark house, a dreadfully miserable house, Matth. xxiii. 15. Never was a child liker a father than thou art like the devil. He is a fallen creature, lying in wickedness ; his nature is enmity against God and his holy law ; so art thou and thine. And though thou put a fair face on it by a form of godliness, that will not make thee unlike him, who can transform himself into an angel of light. So thou art among them.

2. It is possible thou may get out from among them. Satan has a great family, one part whereof he has in the lower house, in hell ; these are devils and damned spirits. If once he get you down among them, ye cannot get out from among them again, but must abide among them for ever and ever. So this call has nothing ado with that part of the devil's family ; they art past hope. But there is another part of it in his upper house of this world, who as really belong to his

family as the other, 2 Cor. iv. 4. with this difference, that as long as they are there, he is never quite sure of them, that as sons they shall abide in his house for ever. The elder brother of the family of heaven, the Lord of his Father's house, has his lower house in this same world, where Satan has his upper one; and he has his Father's commission to fill it out of Satan's family, those of them in his upper house. And for this cause he sends out his ambassadors, ministers, to call in the name of the Lord to them, as in the text, *Come out from among them*, &c. 'Forget thine own people, and thy Father's house,' Psal. xlv. 10. They must be in earnest with that part of the family, and give them no rest, because there is yet hope, Luke xiv. 23. and he has a Spirit that can draw them out effectually, that are farthest in, in the house.

3. Ye will not be carried away from among them against your will. Ye must come away voluntarily, setting down your own feet to make your escape, Psal. cx. 3. There is a generation that makes the doctrine of man's impotency too good a pillow for their sloth: they say they can do nothing, and they will do nothing. But if ye were willing to come away, ye would do something for that end; ye would stretch out the withered hand, ye would take the help of Christ's grace offered unto you, ye would take no rest till ye were got away.

4. Ye need not expect to get the good-will of your father, nor of the family, to the parting. The call is directed to you, without noticing of them; for it is known, they will never let you go as long as they can hinder you. Therefore you must be resolute and peremptory, over the belly of all opposition, to come away from among them, Mat. xi. 12. No sooner does one begin to stir out from among them, but he will raise the hue and cry after him. Hell's flatterings and threatenings are all plied to get them back again, and to lay aside their purpose. But ye must stop you ears to them all, and look not behind you, as Lot's wife did, Gen. xix. 17.

5. Ye must come out from among them, for good and all. *Be ye separate.* Come away wholly, come away for ever, Psal. xlv. 10. Come away, with a sincere purpose never to go back among them, Psal. lxxx. 18. Leave not your heart behind you. Remember Lot's wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt, for the rueful look she gave to what she had left in Sodom. They that come not away thus freely sepa-



rating from them, they will not go far away, they will not go off the devil's ground: and they will go back again, if the communion were over.

6. *Lastly*, Take up nothing from among them, to bring along with you: *Touch not the unclean thing*. There are many who meaning to come out from among them, secure themselves in the devil's snare, and shut the door of the house of heaven on themselves, by the preparation they make for the journey.

(1.) They think they will need something in God's house for their hearts to feed upon. They think Christ's blood will do well enough for their consciences; but to get something to stop the mouths of their hungry hearts, that must have something to feed upon, they bring along with them some of the provision of the house they came from. [1.] Some of the dust they were wont to eat with the serpent: some lust or other, which they have sucked much sap and sweetness out of, and they know not how to live without it, more than Herod without his Herodias, or Judas without the bag, &c. But remember, if ye touch that unclean thing, God will not receive you. Leave it then behind you to the devil from whence it came; it is his proper food, Isa. lxv. ult. all the pleasure he has lies in such things. Say ye, 'I have behaved and quieted myself as a child, that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child,' Psal. cxxxi. 2. [2.] Some of the husks they were wont to eat with the swine, Luke xv. 16; the dry, sapless, foisonless world, that Satan used to dress up to them, as best suited their palate, in the pleasures, vanities, profits, and pomp of it. But touch not that unclean thing, Cant. iv. 8; and drop that unclean bulky vanity, and come away. There is no need of any such provision in our heavenly Father's house, that is abundantly provided with the product of the better country, Isa. lv. 2.

(2.) They think they will need something on them, suitable to the new house they are coming to, that they come not in among them like hand-beggars. And so they take up the garb of the house they come from, and bring it with them, even the filthy unclean garment of their own righteousness, the loathsome rags of the pretended good that is in them, or about them, to commend them to Christ. But O drop the nasty garment, and touch not that unclean thing, Isa. lxiv. 6. Come away naked and bare, and receive the

blessing in the elder brother's clothes, or ye cannot have it. Seek nothing to commend you to him, but your utter misery, vileness and want of all things. The more you bring with you to commend you to him, the more securely ye shut his door on you.

II. The next head is to shew what this coming out from among them is. It is no local motion, but a spiritual motion of the soul; and I give it you briefly in three steps.

1. A hearty and unfeigned willingness to leave them, and to come out from among them. This is the first step. And O what a deal of work is there, ere the sinner can be brought this length! No less than the power of grace is able to bring the soul to this, Psal. cx. 3. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' It is a dead grip the sinner takes of his father's house, and he will shift hither and thither ere he let go the grip. It is as death to him to think of parting with his dear lusts, that are to him as a right hand or eye, which neither promises nor threatnings can make him consent to part with, till grace loose the heart. Whosoever then has got the length of this, they have made the first step, which is the most difficult one.

2. An actual renouncing and giving up with that house, and all that belongs to it. The soul being willing to leave it, actually gives up with it, Job xxxiv. 32; renounces its natural relation to that society, their work, their way; resolving, come what will come, to stay no longer there among them, it bids an eternal farewell to it. Though a Red Sea appear before such persons, which they know not how they will get through, they are peremptory they will not return to the spiritual Egypt, the house of their soul's bondage. This the second step.

3. *Lastly*, A sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ by faith, in the marriage-covenant held forth in the gospel; whereby they take him for all, and instead of all, and give themselves to him, to be his only, wholly, and for ever, Cant. ii. 16. There is no interdependent state betwixt the two families, but the soul lifting the one foot, as it were sets down the other. It lets go the hold of its lusts and idols, by embracing of Jesus Christ, not only for a rest to the conscience, but a rest to the heart; and embracing Christ as the one pearl of great price, lets go all that it has. Thus the soul is united to Jesus Christ, and is come out from among them, as one that is

married is from that moment no more of her father's house, but her husband's, So the soul, though in the midst of the world lying in wickedness, is no more of that society, but come out from among them, John xv. 19.

Now, the souls thus joined to Christ, are by him introduced to his Father's house and presence, and by him adopted as his children, as Jacob did the two sons of Joseph for his sake.

I shall not here stand to confirm the doctrine, since it is very plain from the text, and I confirmed the certainty of adoption into God's family, to those that comply with the gospel-call, the last day; but shall proceed to the application; which I make in the words of the text.

Wherefore, O sinners, *Come forth from among them, and be ye separate,* &c. It is the Lord's call to you this day to come away freely and cleanly out of the devil's family, and the Lord will take you in. Hearken unto this,

1. Ye that have lived all your days at ease in Satan's family, never knew ye were there, and were never troubled how to get out of it. Open your eyes, and know your natural state; see yourselves children of the devil, and heirs of wrath, at length; and sleep no longer the sleep of death, but look about you; see your danger, and come out from among them, and be ye separate to-day.

2. Ye that sometimes have had an awakening, and seen yourselves undone, but have fallen asleep again, and look on that former fright as a dream. Know ye that it was most real, and represented your case to you as indeed it was, and yet is: and Satan it is, who to keep you still among them, deluded you to think, that God's armies advancing against you were but the shadow of the mountains. Wherefore bestir yourselves, and come out from among them.

3. Ye apostates and backsliders, that sometimes seemed to make considerable advances in coming out, but now have gone back in among them, and fallen afresh to the entertainment, the work and manners of the house. Our Lord gives you a new call to come out from among them, and set to the way again, Jer. iii. 22.

4. Ye that are halting, and in a doubt what to do, whether to come out from among them or no. Conscience is pressing you forward, and corruption drawing you back. Something tells you, 'To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Something else is saying, It is too soon, there will



be time enough after this. Know this last is the language ye hear among them that seek the ruin of your souls. Take no heed to what they say, but resolutely come out from among them.

5. Ye that have been often aiming at coming, but never yet have come away freely and cleanly. Make a fair and cleanly separation now, *Touch not the unclean thing*. Give up with your natural father's house, and have no more to do with any thing that belongs to it. Let no beloved lust be spared. Leave not a hoof behind you, as being minded never to return.

6. *Lastly*, All that desire for Heaven or the favour of God, in time or eternity, come out from among them. And be still coming farther and farther from them, and nearer to Jesus Christ. I offer the following motives.

*Mot.* 1. It is a most miserable case to be among them, the true sight whereof may fright one out of their society. Never could one that was in a den of lions, or beset with serpents, or enclosed with venomous creatures, be more desirous to be from among them, than God's elect to be out of the world lying in wickedness, out of the devil's family, when once the Spirit of the Lord has opened their eyes to see clearly where they are, Luke xv. 17, 18. For,

1. There is not, and never will be, any peace with heaven among them. This is the apostle's argument in the text, ver. 14.—17. Sooner shall light and darkness agree, than the two families of heaven and hell. God has declared they are a society with whom he will have war for ever, Isa. lvii. ult. Some of the devil's family may be roaring unto God's felt enmity against them, while others have a profound peace; but the one as well as the other stand for marks to the arrows of God's justice, Deut xxix. 19, 20. As long as thou art among them, thou art an enemy to God, and God is an enemy to thee, Rom. viii. 7. Luke xix. 27. Wilt thou be able to endure this? No; *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, &c.*

2. There is not, and never will be, any thing pure or clean among them. *Touch not the unclean thing*, i. e. Meddle not with any thing that belongs to them. For they, and all that is theirs, are unclean and loathsome in the sight of God, Tit. i. 15. As long as thou art among them, thy whole soul in all its faculties is utterly defiled, and so are all thy works,

even the best of them ; for thou canst do nothing but sin, canst do no good at all, Psal. xiv. 1. The opening of thy mouth to God in prayer or praise, is but like the opening of an unripe grave ; all thy fair promises and engagements to duty, are but abominable deceit, Rom. iii. 13. The meddling with God's holy things, see what it is, Isa. lxvi. 3. ' He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man : he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck : he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood : he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol : yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.' For a child of the devil can never please God in any thing, till he come out from among them, and be separate, Heb. xi. 6.

3. There is nothing but rank poverty among them, nor ever will be, Rev. iii. 17. The best raiment among them to cover the soul's nakedness, is rags, filthy rags. And they must appear before God as their Judge ; and that is all they have to hide their shame, and it will never do. The whole family is drowned in debt to the justice of God, and they have nothing wherewith to pay. Sin is the debt, and it will be exacted ; and as long as ye are among them, ye cannot have a cautioner, for in the whole family there is not one that is able to answer for it. And there is no forgiveness of the debt, while ye remain among them, Acts iii. 19.

4. There is a cloud of wrath hangs above them continually, and abideth on them, and every one that is among them, John iii. ult. While ye are among them, your state is a state of wrath, and ye are children of wrath. There is never a gleam of light or favour towards you, Psal. vii. 11. There is never one word of God speaks peace to you. While ye dwell among them, ye dwell under Mount Sinai, that fiery mountain where the curses of a broken law are flying about your ears. And though being asleep ye are secure, ye shall no sooner be awakened, than ye shall see the fearful lightnings, hear the thunders of wrath, and the voice of the trumpet, &c. Therefore I would say to you, as Deut. i. 6. ' Come out from among them ; ye have dwelt too long in this mount.'

5. Death reigns among them. See where they sit, Matth. iv. 16. ' In the region and shadow of death.' The whole society are a parcel of condemned criminals, John iii. 18. that know not how soon the sentence shall be executed upon them ; their father the devil ready to be the executioner ; they

are all in a dying condition, their souls have got their death's wounds, and they are pining away in their iniquity, while in the mean time their eyes are held that they cannot see the preciousness of the Physician. Nay, they are dead already in a spiritual sense; God, the life of the soul, is departed far from them. O! why will ye stay in the congregation of the dead? Come out from among them to the Lord of life.

6. *Lastly*, They are not to stay in this upper house of the world; they will all be down in the lower house together ere long. The devil's upper house is a throng house now; but the day comes that God will set it on fire about their ears, 2 Pet. iii. 10. And then the whole family shall go away together into the bottomless pit, and be all under one roof, so as not one shall remain behind. There are some dropping down to it daily; yet the rest remain secure; but it will not be always so. There was a dreadful cry at Dathan and Abiram's downgoing, Num. xvi. 34. What a cry will there be, when the whole family shall go down together? Rev. xx. ult. Therefore I would say to you, as Num. xvi. 26. 'Come out from among them; depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.'

*Mot.* 2. Come out from among them, and be ye separate; and the Lord will take you into his family, and that in the quality of sons and daughters. Ye have his word expressly for it in the text: and that has been the lot of all that came away before you, John i. 12. And that this may take with you, consider,

1. The glorious society ye shall be taken into, being taken as children into God's family by adoption. The apostle declares this at large, Heb. xii. 22,—24.

2. I might say much to the commendation of the Father of the family. He is the most honourable, loving, helpful, and rich father, the wisest father, and he is an immortal father. His children shall never be fatherless; let all the world leave them, they shall have a father to take them up. And while they are under minority, they shall have the best attendants. The elder brother of the family is fairer than the sons of men; and he is of our nature, and will own us as of his flesh and of his bones, Eph. v. 30. And the most loving to his adopted brethren; he died for them while they were yet in the devil's family. And he can do all with his Father,



having the entire management of the house of heaven, John v. 22. He is a most compassionate and merciful High Priest. The Spirit of the family is a noble spirit, that will spirit you for the greatest achievements; a holy and sanctifying Spirit, that will make the vilest heart holy; a quickening Spirit, an enlightening Spirit. And all the children partake of this Spirit.

3. Ye shall have glorious privileges here; and, among the rest, establishment and perseverance in the family, John viii. 35. Come once in, and ye shall never be cast out, and never get leave to fall out again.

4. *Lastly*, The full possession of your eternal inheritance in heaven, Matth. xxv. 34. He will give the kingdom to all his children, sons and daughters. Your elder brother will give you to sit on his throne.

Come out from among them, then, unto Jesus Christ, and so be entered into God's family by adoption. Seemeth it a small thing to you to be children of the house of heaven, to have God for your Father, and ye to be his sons and daughters; Believe this offer of the gospel, therefore, made to you, O children of the house of hell, and close with the offer of adoption into God's family, and receive the seal of it in the sacrament. I beseech you to accept it, nay, I charge you to come out from among them this day, and enter into God's family through Jesus Christ, under the pain of God's eternal displeasure. What ails you at it; the language of the hearts of many will be,

1. They do not like the laws of the house. They think it would be what would take away their liberty, and pent them up to intolerable bondage. *Ans.* No Satan's service is slavery, and the worst of slavery. If ye continue in it, your chains will be ever on you; the chains of your lusts are rattling about you now, 2 Tim. ii. 26. and the chains of wrath will be rattling about you through eternity, Matth. xxii. 13. But those of God's family enjoy true liberty, John viii. 36. And their liberty shall be enlarged after, and be very glorious, Rom. viii. 21.

2. They like not the society of the house. They think it is but the peevish silly part of mankind, the scum of the world, that trouble themselves with these things. *Ans.* No; they are the excellent in the earth, Prov. xii. 26. David, a king, thought them so, Psal. xvi. 3. Why do ye despise

them, but because they are of another spirit than the spirit of the devil's family? Remember, that 'not many wise men after the flesh are called,' &c. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. But I assure you the main quarrel and the ground of this is, ye like not the Father of the family, and therefore not those that bear his image, 1 John v. 1. However, remember, that the day comes when you will say, O that my soul were in their souls stead! 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

3. *Lastly*, They do not believe any such thing, as that God will make men his sons and daughters. *Ans.* Then ye do not believe God's word in the text, John i. 12. Christ's death and sufferings must lose their end, Gal. iv. 4, 5. But ye will cured of that, if not before, yet at their receiving their inheritance as children, Matth. xxv. 34. when unbelievers get their doom.

But there may be some that would fain believe it, and that with application too, that they might come away and partake of it. But Satan and their hearts muster up objections against it; such as,

1. Was it ever heard, that there was an adoption where the party adopting was not childless? *Ans.* God's ways are not man's ways. It is free grace only, and no need, that puts the heavenly Father to adopt any of his creatures.—Yet there is a suitableness in it to the divine wisdom. God's family suffered a vast diminution by the spiritual death of children, and thus it is made up again.

2. But how is it consistent with the honour of the adopter to take men as children into his family? *Ans.* This is provided for by the incarnation of the Son; man's nature is thereby nobilitated. The Son of God became the Son of man, that so the sons of men might become the sons of God, in a consistency with God's honour.

3. But I am afraid God will never take me into his family. *Ans.* Wherefore, if ye come in by the door, through Jesus Christ? The greatness of your former sins will not hinder it, Isa. i. 18. the multitude of them, 1 John i. 7. your backslidings neither, Jer. iii. 22. though ye have been the worst of sinners, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. In ye must be, or ye perish.

4. But Satan plies me at a terrible rate, so that I think I will never get away out from among them. *Ans.* When

the devil apprehends his time short, he has great wrath.—When the children of Israel were nearest their deliverance, Pharaoh made their bondage hardest. Be resolute, like the lepers of old.

5. *Lastly*, But I fear I will never be able to carry suitably to the character of one of the heavenly family. *Ans.* Take Christ for sanctification, put your heart and life in his hand this day, for purifying and managing it, Eph. v. 25, 26. ‘Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word.’ Believe the promises of sanctification, and cleanly through bearing; look on them as sealed by the sacrament, and conscientiously use the means of holiness.

To shut up all, I testify to every one, that they are undone, for ever, if they come not out from among them, and be separate, and touch no unclean thing; and that there is nothing to hinder your entrance into God’s family, if ye be content to come out from among them, and to close with Christ. He will receive you, and introduce you into his Father’s family, entertain you at his table, and at length carry you to the upper house, where ye shall be for ever with the Lord.

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#### OF SANCTIFICATION.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 11.—*But ye are sanctified—by the Spirit of our God.*

**I**N this verse the apostle tells the believing Corinthians.

1. What some of them sometime were, such, viz. as those ver. 9, 10. ‘fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners;’ even the worst and grossest sinners, who therefore could have nothing to move God to sanctify them.

2. What they now all were, viz. the true believers among them; they were ‘washed.’ Though some of them in their natural state were more unclean and vile than others, yet they all needed to be, and accordingly were washed,

(1.) In sanctification, whereby sin itself is gradually carried



out of the heart and life, and grace planted therein, and actuated, and advanced. This is done by the Spirit of God, who is holy, and makes the elect holy.

2. In justification, whereby the guilt of sin is removed, and the soul clothed with a perfect righteousness. This is done ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus;’ i. e. by the merits and blood of Christ, through Christ apprehended by faith. The apostle’s order of stating these two will be considered afterwards.

The doctrine of the text is as follows, viz.

DOCT. ‘All that are effectually called, are freely sanctified by the Spirit of Christ.’

In treating this subject, I shall shew,

I. The general notion of sanctification.

II. More particularly inquire into the nature of it.

III. Deduce some inferences.

I. I will lay before you the general nature of sanctification. It imports three things.

1. Separation, or setting apart to a holy use or service.—Thus the bread and wine in the sacrament are sanctified, and thus Aaron and his sons were sanctified. And thus the sanctification of the Spirit, is the Lord’s taking one out of the corrupt mass of mankind lying in wickedness, and setting him apart for himself, Psal. iv. 3. So that holiness is God’s mark and seal set on a soul, testifying it to be his in a peculiar manner, Eph. i. 13.

2. Purification, or taking away of pollution. Thus people are called to sanctify themselves. There is a natural impurity and filthiness that every soul naturally is sunk in, 2 Cor. vii. 1. They are loathsome in the sight of God, all over defiled with filthy lusts. Sanctification is the Spirit’s cleansing of the soul from its impurities; breaking the reign of sin, working out sin from the heart and life, as the spring doth the mud cast in it.

3. Preparation, whereby a thing or person is made fit for use or service. Thus our food is sanctified by the word and prayer. Naturally we are unfit for God’s service; sanctification fits us for it, 2 Tim. ii. 21. What use are we for in the world, if not for God? But the unsanctified soul is not meet for his use: but the Lord loathes them, and their services too, as one would do liquor in a foul vessel.

II. More particularly, I will inquire into the nature of the sanctification of a soul. And let us consider,

1. The kinds of sanctification.
2. The Author of it.
3. The moving cause of it.
4. Wherein it consists.
5. The parts of it.
6. The subject of it.
7. The effect of it.
8. How it is carried on.
9. The means of it.

FIRST, I shall consider the kinds of sanctification distinguishable. Sanctification of a soul is twofold.

1. Initial sanctification, which is the implanting of the seeds of grace in the soul at first, and is the same with regeneration, 1 John iii. 9. wherein the Spirit of Christ comes into the man's heart with his graces, and takes possession of him for God. The whole soul is cast into a new mould and frame, and the image of God is drawn anew upon it.

2. Progressive sanctification, whereby that change is carried on more and more, the Spirit holding hand to the begun work, Acts xx. 32. Satan's image is more defaced, and the image of God more perfected in the soul; corruption more weakened, and grace more excited and strengthened. This work lasts through the saint's whole life, and is never perfected till death.

These are one and the same work for substance, though differing in circumstances; and no man has the one, but he has the other too. Initial sanctification goes before justification in the order of nature, as being the principle from which faith doth arise; and this accounts for the apostle's order in the text: but progressive sanctification, i. e. sanctification distinguished from regeneration, follows justification.

SECONDLY, Let us consider the Author of sanctification, whose work it is.

1. Negatively, It is not the sinner himself, nor any other creature, who is the author of it. We can well defile ourselves with all impurity, but cannot cleanse ourselves. We will lie still in our filthiness, till help come from another quarter, Eph. ii. 1. We are bid to cleanse our hands and hearts: but, alas! the rule of our duty is not the measure of our strength.

2. Positively, It is the work of God ; for it needs no less power than was necessary for creating a world, or raising the dead. It is the work of a whole Trinity to sanctify a soul, as lightly as many think of being holy. It is the work of the Father, Jude, ver. i. ‘ Sanctified by God the Father ;’ of the Son, Eph. v. 26. ‘ That he (Christ) might sanctify —it ;’ of the Holy Spirit, 2 Thess. ii. 13. ‘ Through sanctification of the Spirit.’ But in a special manner it belongs to the Spirit ; as the Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Holy Ghost sanctifies. It is the work of the Spirit of God then. For,

1. In initial sanctification the Spirit acts alone, and the poor sinner is wholly passive, and can do nothing that way. For he is dead in sin, and cannot move out of its dominion. He lies in the grave like the dry bones, which cannot live, nor stand up till they be breathed upon by the Lord himself.

2. In progresive sanctification, though the sinner does act towards his own sanctification, 2 Cor. vii. 1. yet he acts not but as he is acted by the Holy Spirit, Phil. ii. 13. In vain will he spread out his sails, if the wind from heaven blow not, Cant. iv. 16. No blow of his struck in the battle against lusts will do execution, if the Spirit do not carry it home.

THIRDLY, The moving cause of it. Sanctification is a great benefit : whom the Lord bestows it upon, he puts an honour on, for they are set apart for himself. There is an intrinsic glory in holiness, Psal. xlv. 13. ‘ The King’s daughter is all glorious within.’ God is glorious in it, and therefore no wonder it be the glory of the creature. When the Lord makes one holy, he does more for him than if he would give him all the gold of the Indies, or make him sole monarch of the world. Nay, the gift of sanctification is more worth than the Spirit of prophecy, or the faith of miracles : for men may be ruined notwithstanding of these, but not if they have this.

The only cause of it is free grace, not any personal worth in the creature, Tit. iii. 5. As the sun shines without hire, and enlightens the dark world ; so does the Holy Spirit sanctify the unholy sinner freely, without any thing in him to move him thereto, Matth. xi. 25, 26. For,

1. There is nothing in an unholy sinner that is pleasing and acceptable in God’s sight, Rom. viii. 8. There is no-



thing but stench and rottenness in the dead soul, till the sanctifying Spirit enter into him. His best dispositions, actions, and performances, are sin, being without faith, and the mere product of nature unrenewed.

2. Though there be a great difference betwixt natural men before the world, one having by far the advantage of the other in respect of their natural tempers and the way of their life; yet the Lord does not give his sanctifying grace according to these advantages, but oft-times grace takes hold of those who are most unlikely to get it, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, &c. Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before Scribes and Pharisees. And oft-times sovereign grace overlooks those of the most sweet natural dispositions, and brings in those of the most rugged.

3. Sovereign grace often chuses the time for sanctifying the sinner, when he has gone the farthest length in sin and wickedness. Paul was carried the length of blasphemy and persecution, ere sanctifying grace took hold of him, 1 Tim. i. 13. And Manasseh was carried to horrid murders and witchcraft, ere he was prevented by divine grace. Many have been carried to extraordinary acts of wickedness, whereby they have lost their lives in the course of justice, whom grace has plucked as brands out of the burning, to proclaim the freedom of grace.

FOURTHLY, I shall shew wherein sanctification consists, or what the Spirit doth to a sinner when he sanctifies him. It consists in the renewing of the sinner after the image of God. Eph. iv. 23, 24. The ruin of man's nature lay in defacing of the image of God which was upon him: sanctification is the renewing and repairing of it, without which God can take no delight in his creature. Now, in all renewing, the old is put away, and the new brought in. So there are two acts of the Spirit in sanctification.

1. Destroying of the body of sin, called the old man, Rom. vi. 6. putting it away, Col. ii. 11. The Spirit of the Lord breaks the dominion of sin in the soul, and turns it off the throne, that it cannot command the sinner as aforetime, Rom. vi. 14. weakens and mortifies the several lusts thereof, Rom. viii. 13. So that it is a crucified man, who has got his death's wounds by the nails, and shall not come down till he die out.

2. Endowing the sinner with grace, even with all the

graces of the Spirit, John i. 16. whereby the sinner becomes a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. This is the new man which is put on in sanctification; the seed of heaven, which can never misgive, but will spring up to everlasting life, being carried on towards perfection, by the same Spirit.

FIFTHLY, The parts of sanctification are two.

1. Mortification, whereby the sinner is enabled more and more to die unto sin, Rom. vi. 4, 6. The Spirit applying the virtue of Christ's death to the sinner, mortifies him to sin, blunts the edge of his affection to sin and sinful courses, so that in respect of sin, he is like a dying man, So that although he be not quite freed from it, yet he is on the way to be so. His lusts are upon the cross, nailed through and pierced to the heart, not to come down till they have breathed out their last, Gal. v. 24. Like a dying man taking leave of friends, he is parting with his old lusts: like a man leaving off cares about the world, the bent of his soul is turned away from his former courses.

2. Vivification, whereby the sinner is enabled more and more to live unto righteousness, Rom. vi. 4. The sanctified sinner leads a new life, in respect of which he is as a man raised from the dead, not meddling as before in the business of the world: so the sanctified sinner lives as one of another world, not conforming himself to the sinful courses of this world, but being transformed into likeness to those of the better world, Rom. xii. 2. Phil. iii. 20. The business of his life is to serve the Lord, and work out his own salvation; to be preparing for the eternal rest in heaven, whither his heart is carried before him.

SIXTHLY, Let us view the subject of sanctification.—Under which consider,

1. Who are sanctified.

2. What of them is sanctified.

*First*, Who are sanctified, It is the elect who are sanctified, even all of them, and they only, Eph. i. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13. And elect infants among the rest, dying in infancy, being naturally corrupted, must needs be sanctified too, by the Holy Spirit, since they are of the number of the elect. For others may be sanctified from the womb, Jer. i. 5. And none other but the elect do partake of this grace of sanctification: so that sanctification is a certain evidence of election.

*Secondly*, What of them is sanctified. The whole man is sanctified, 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 Thess. v. 23. The grace of sanctification is a holy leaven, that goes through the whole lump, and makes every part of the man holy.

1. The soul is sanctified in all the faculties thereof, new qualities being infused into and advanced in them. (1.) The understanding naturally darkened, is renewed in saving knowledge, after God's image, Col. iii. 10. A new light is struck out in the mind; the light of grace arises there, whereby the soul knows spiritual things in another manner than before; and this advanceth unto the perfect day, Prov. iv. 18. (2.) The will, naturally perverse and rebellious, gets a righteous set and bent, agreeable to the will of God, Eph. ii. 24. whereby it is averse to evil, and prone to good. (3.) The unholy affections are made holy, *ibid.* So that their love, hatred, delight, sorrows, &c. are changed. And herewith comes along the sanctification of the conscience and memory.

2. The body is sanctified, in so far as it is made the temple of the Holy Spirit, and a member of Christ, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 19. And the members thereof are changed in respect of their use, becoming instruments of righteousness employed for the Lord, Rom. vi. 13. In respect of which the body is presented a holy sacrifice to God, to serve and honour him with, whether by doing or suffering, Rom. xii. 1.

But although the whole man is sanctified, yet no part of the man is perfectly sanctified in this life. It is neither midnight to them as with the ungenerate, nor mid-day as with the glorified, but twilight, which is a mixture of darkness and light. Hence arises the combat betwixt the flesh and Spirit, Gal. v. 17. Every grace has a weed of the contrary corruption by the side of it, which occasions this struggle, and imperfection in the best of their works.

SEVENTHLY, I am to shew the effect of sanctification. That is holiness. The fruit of this work of the Spirit is habitual holiness, that is, an habitual aversion of the soul to evil, and inclination to good; and actual holiness in all manner of life and conversation, in good works, which have God's word for their rule, his glory for their end, and are done in faith. Both which we have, Psal. xlv. 13. 'The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.'



EIGHTLY, I proceed to shew how sanctification is carried on. Now, though sanctification must needs be begun in an instant, yet it is not a simple act, but a work carried on by degrees, to which many actions (and these repeated) of the Holy Spirit do concur. The believer not being perfectly renewed at first, the renovation is carried on by degrees, and the Spirit is at that work still, so as not to give it over till it be perfected, though there be many interruptions of it. And,

1. The Spirit implants grace in the soul, sows the heavenly seed there, framing the heart a new, giving it a new power, and a new set, towards God and his law; and putting in new motions and inclinations in the soul, agreeable to the holy law, and contrary to the natural sinful ones, Heb. viii. 10. So that the soul is inclined to love what before it loathed, and to loath what before it loved.

2. He preserves the grace implanted, 1 Pet i. 5. Though it is lodged in the same heart with an ill neighbour, the remains of natural corruption; yet he keeps it that it do not die out, he preserves it as a spark of fire in the midst of the ocean.

9. He excites it and quickens it, to pursue and resist the flesh, Phil. ii. 13. Grace sometimes may fall so very low in the soul, that it becomes like a spark hid under the ashes: yet the sanctifying Spirit blows it up again into a flame, Cant. iv. 16. As the tree in the winter divested of its leaves and verdure, when the warm sun returns in the spring, the sap driven to the root returns, and is diffused through the whole.

4. He strengthens it by new supplies, Isa. xl. ult. so as the soul is enabled more and more to hold on the battle, and gets victories of the enemy, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. For grace is a child of heaven, which has all its nourishment and strength from the same Spirit that gave it life.

5. *Lastly*, At death, but not till then, he perfects it, Heb. xii. 23. Then the new man is brought to its perfect stature, Eph. iv. 13. Often may the soul be ready to say, One day I will perish by the hand of such a lust. But the Spirit of God will perfect the work he has begun. And when the walls of the leprous house are taken down, the leprosy shall be quite removed. From what has been said, we may infer,

*Inf.* 1. The case of unsanctified sinners is a wretched case; they are lying with the lost world, in their filthiness, utterly unfit to serve God acceptably, or to have communion with him here or hereafter. For they are not sanctified, not separated, purified, nor prepared for God's service.

2. Behold the beauty of holiness, and fall in love with it, and labour to attain it. The holy man is more excellent than his neighbour, as set apart for God: Israel shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations,' because they are a holy people. It is the purity of the soul, God's image drawn on the man, it is a newness of nature from heaven, and like heaven. By it a man is a vessel fit for the Master's use, honourably employed now, and most honourably hereafter.

3. See the way how ye may be made holy. The fire from your own hearth will not purge you; faithless vows, resolutions, and endeavours, will not do it, Isa. l. ult. The Spirit of the Lord can only perform the work. O! cry for the Spirit, wait on in ordinances for the blowing of the Spirit. Come to Christ by faith, that ye may partake of his Spirit.

4. Sanctification is not the work of a day, but a work that must be in a continual progress. Sit not down on any measure of grace attained. They that are converted still need the Spirit for their sanctification. Beware of grieving the Spirit, lest the work be interrupted. Make no truce with the enemy, but pursue the lusts of the body of sin vigorously.

5. *Lastly*, See here that there are none so unholy, but they may be made holy. It is a work of grace, and grace is powerful to overcome the strongest lusts. It is a work of free grace, and therefore no vileness nor unworthiness of the creature, that is content to be made holy, can hinder it. This may lay the pride of some, who think they deserve grace, and whose hearts fret against the Lord, if grace be not given them in an hour of temptation. Man's heart perverteth his way, and fretteth against the Lord. And this may encourage those who think the Lord will never look on them.

LASTLY, Let us consider the means of sanctification.—The outward means that the Spirit makes use of in this work, and which have all their efficacy from him, are,

1. Ordnanances, public, private, and secret, Isa. xii. 3. es-

pecially the word, and sacraments thereto appended, Eph. v. 26. And they that would be holy must use these means of sanctification, whereby the Spirit begins and carries on the work.

2. Providences; smiling and favourable dispensations have a tendency that way, Rom. ii. 4. but especially afflictions are means which the Spirit makes use of for this end, Isa. xxvii. 9. ‘By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.’

I shall now shut up this subject with a few inferences, besides those I drew under the former heads.

*Inf.* 1. Those who are unrenewed are unsanctified. Where there is no change of heart and life, there is no grace, 2 Cor. v. 17. Ah! how many live as they were born, and are like to die as they live? They have no changes, but from evil to evil: no change from sin to holiness, and yet are unconcerned with their unrenewed state, sleeping until they sleep the sleep of death.

2. A partial change is not sanctification. Those who are changed, but not in the whole man, are not truly sanctified, but are yet in their natural pollution. Sanctification is not a new head full of knowledge, with the old heart and life; nor is it a new life, with the old heart and nature. But it is a change that goes through the whole soul and body, which must needs be followed with a new life, 2 Cor. v. 17.

3. True sanctification puts work in the hand of the sanctified, that will fill their hands while they live. Dying to sin, and living to righteousness, are works that will fill up every minute we have in the world.

4. Let none be so foolish as to sit down contented without sanctification, but study holiness as ever ye would see heaven. We want a title to heaven, we must get that in justification and adoption: we want a meetness for heaven, and we must get that in sanctification. The sanctified are elected, and shall be glorified, 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, 4. And they that live and die unsanctified, shall never see heaven, Heb. xii. 14. ‘For without holiness no man shall see the Lord.’

5. *Lastly*, As ever ye would be holy, attend and improve the means of grace. Let not your afflictions drive you from God, neither be stupid under them, but fall in with the design of providence in them, for your sanctification.



## UNION WITH CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO SANCTIFICATION.

1 COR. i. 30.—*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us—sanctification.*

**T**HE world in its greatest darkness was not insensible that man's nature was corrupted, that they needed somewhat wherewith they might please God, attain to happiness, and repair the wound which they understood their nature had got. And although that Jews and Gentiles had different devices whereby they thought this might be obtained, yet all agreed in that it behoved them to go into themselves for it, and to draw something out of the ruins of their natural powers wherewith to help themselves, thereby discovering they did not sufficiently understand the depth of the corruption of human nature. And this principle is so agreeable to corrupt reason, that God's device to bring about man's salvation from sin and misery in and by another, to wit, Christ, was to 'the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness,' ver. 23. And if we sound to the bottom, it is the same at this day to the unregenerate part of the Christian world.

In the text we have the sum of God's device for the salvation of sinners, and it centres in Jesus Christ who was crucified. We may take up the text and it in these two things.

1. That the whole of man's salvation shall be from Christ. God has made or constituted him the fountain of all salvation, from whom it must be conveyed to all that shall partake of it. As Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over Egypt; and when the famished people cried to him for bread, he bade them go to Joseph, Gen. xli. 55. so God has dealt with the Mediator, and tells us by the gospel, Psal. lxxxix. 24. 'My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.' If we look into the ruins of the fall, we may take them up under four heads, answerable to which there are remedies in Christ.

(1.) Man is ignorant naturally of the way to true happiness: he has lost God, and knows not how to find him again.—Falling into the hands of Satan, he lost his two eyes, like

Samson; gropes for the way of happiness, but cannot find it, like the Sodomites at Lot's door. Some remains of knowledge found in the ruins of the fall were improved in the world, by study, observation of the works of God, and in some by external revelation, which yet the natural darkness of the mind did pervert. And these notions, thus improved, they called wisdom. But the way of happiness by works, the only way naturally known by Adam, being blocked up by his fall, it was impossible for them by their wisdom to fall on the other way, unless we should say, that fallen man's natural knowledge could reach farther than his natural knowledge when it was whole and entire before the fall. So man's wisdom is his folly.

For remedy of this, Christ is made 'wisdom.' The treasures of wisdom and knowledge were lodged in him, Col. ii. 3. and he is constituted the grand Teacher of all that mind for eternal happiness. Therefore the philosophers and Rabbi's must lay by their books, as insufficient to point them the way to happiness, and study that body of divinity, Jesus Christ, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily. The wise men of the world must renounce confidence in their natural abilities, draw a black score over all their attainments in their Christless state, and sit down at Christ's feet, as knowing nothing, and learn of him: and those of the shallowest capacities, giving up themselves to him, shall get 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 6.

(2.) Man is unrighteous, and cannot stand before a righteous God. His guilt binds him over to wrath, and makes him miserable before a just God, a revenger of sin. And this is so impressed on the hearts of men, that even a natural conscience sometimes makes terrible heart-quakes within him, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death.' Now, the natural man, for remedy of this, goes about to work out a righteousness of his own, to spin a righteousness out of his own bowels, and to appease the anger of God, and gain his favour, by his obedience. But when it appears in the light of the holy law, it is nothing but as a nasty, rotten, moth-eaten garment, that cannot cover the soul before the Lord, Isa. lxiv. 6. Let them stretch it as they will, the bed is shorter than a man can

stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in it.

For remedy of this, Christ is made *righteousness*. He, by his obedience to the law's commands and suffering the wrath it threatened, hath brought in everlasting righteousness, which is a large garment, able to cover all that betake themselves to it, for it is 'the righteousness of God;' a beautiful garment, sound in every part, for it is white raiment, without the least stain, being the righteousness of the Son of God, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Therefore the most refined moralists must lay aside, in point of confidence, their highest attainments in morality, as filthy rags before the Lord; and the strictest professors and livers on earth, who follow after the law of righteousness, must renounce their inherent righteousness, and sit down naked before the Lord, to receive the imputed righteousness of Christ. And the vilest of men coming to him, shall find a righteousness in him to be communicated to them; so that they that are far from righteousness shall be wrapt up in a perfect righteousness, if they will take Christ to them as God has made him.

(3.) Man is unholy, unfit for communion with a holy God here or hereafter. His soul is dead in sin, his lusts live and are vigorous in him; so that he is no more meet for heaven than a sow for a palace. The natural man, to help himself in this point, calls together his natural powers as in a solemn day, and endeavours to set about his duty, and turn the stream of his life and conversation into the channel of the law. Some prevail this way to the reformation of their outward conversation; but there is as much difference betwixt true holiness and their attainment, as betwixt a living body and an embalmed corpse. Others find all their endeavours to no purpose, and so they come to despair of sanctification, and therefore even lay the reins on the necks of their lusts, Jer. ii. 25. And how can it be otherwise in either of them? for, like fools or madmen, they go into the mire to wash themselves clean; the house that must be razed from the foundation, they go to patch up and repair; for in their attempts for holiness, they act as if they had need of nothing but activity to use and improve their natural abilities for sanctification; which is as opposite to the doctrine of the gospel, as to say, the cripple needs but to set himself to rise and



walk, and he will be cured, is contrary to common sense : for our natural abilities will serve us no more for sanctification, than the cripple's legs will serve him to walk. Let men learn from Job, that where the whole body is all full of boils and sores, their hands are not fit to scrape the sores on the rest of their body, being as ill themselves as any other part : therefore he took a potsherd, and scraped himself. And while to the unbelieving there is nothing pure, but their very natural powers are defiled, they can never purify the man in holiness.

But for remedy in this, Christ is made *sanctification*. There is a fulness of the spirit of holiness lodged in him, to be communicated to the unholy ; and to him God sends the unholy sinner, that out of his fulness he may receive, and grace for grace. Therefore the most sober natural man and strictest professor, who has hammered out of his mere natural abilities, assisted by external revelation, a life blameless before the world, being estranged still to the life of faith, must know that he has but put a new face on the old man, which Christ never intended to repair, but to destroy, Rom. vi. 6; and must begin anew to attain true holiness, from and by him whom the Father has made sanctification to us. And the most polluted sinner, whose lusts are most raging, may confidently try this grand method of sanctification, which can no more fail him than God's device can fail to reach the end he designed for it.

(4.) Man by the fall is become mortal, liable to many bodily infirmities and miseries, and at length must go to the grave, the house appointed for all living. Nature could find no remedy for this. The learned Athenians mocked at the resurrection of the dead, Acts vii. 32 ; the Sadducees among the Jews denied it, Matth. xxii. 23. The unrenewed part of the world, who, by the benefit of external revelation, have embraced the doctrine of the resurrection, and particularly of the happy resurrection, have no other way to attain it, but what they follow to attain righteousness and sanctification ; and that being insufficient to attain them, must be so also in this respect ; for all their Christless endeavours leave them still under guilt and corruption ; these bonds of death, wherewith the second death will draw them down into the pit, when they are raised out of their graves at the last day still hold them fast.

But man's salvation cannot be complete without a remedy for this; therefore Christ is made 'redemption,' who will give in due time deliverance to his people from misery and death, which is called 'the redemption of the body,' Rom. viii. 23. And in this sense he calls himself 'the resurrection and the life,' John. xi. 25. So our redemption is in him, in so far as he has got above death and the power of the grave by his resurrection, and that as a public person, thereby ensuring the happy resurrection of all that are in him. Therefore, if ever we would get our heads above these waters, we must come to him for it.

2. That all who partake of this salvation, must partake of it in him, by virtue of union with him: *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, &c.* As the stock is stay, strength, and sap to the branches; so is Christ wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, to them that are in him, or unto sinners united to him. The sap of the stock is not conveyed to branches that are not in it: neither is Christ wisdom, &c. to any but those that are in him. He is the Saviour of his body; and we must partake of his salvation as members of his body. In the old world, when the deluge came on, some without the ark getting up on the tops of trees or mountains, might be safe for a while; but none but those who were in the ark were safe to the end: so men that are out of Christ may get common temporal favours from the Lord; but none but those in him receive that wisdom, &c. which is the great salvation. The lost world is the first Adam, and the natural branches of that stock. The saved world are such branches as are taken out of that dead and killing stock, and ingrafted into Christ the true vine.

This then is the grand device of salvation, that Christ shall be all to sinners, and that they must partake of all in him; which is quite opposite to our natural imaginations, and exalts the free grace of God, depressing nature. (1.) They do not help themselves, their help is in another: He is made wisdom, &c. (2.) They do not so much as help themselves to their helper; for it is of God, by the power of his grace, that they are brought to be in him. It is not the branch itself, but the husbandman that ingrafts it.

The doctrine I observe from the words is,  
DOCT. 'God's device for the sanctification of an unholy world is, that sinners unite with Christ, and derive holiness

from him, whom the Father has constituted the head of sanctifying influences. Union with Christ is the only way to sanctification.'

For proof of this doctrine, consider the following scriptures, Rom. vii. 4. John xv. 5. Gal. ii. 20.

In handling this doctrine, I shall,

I. Drop a word concerning holiness derived from Christ.

II. Shew how it is derived from him.

III. Apply.

1. As to holiness, it is that disposition of heart and course of life which is conformable to God's holy law, and pleases him. In this life it is imperfect, but in the life to come it will be perfected. I shall only offer these few things concerning it.

1. True holiness is universal in respect of the commands of God, Psal. cxix. 6. 'I have respect unto all thy commandments;' the holy man making conscience of the duties of both tables of the law, his duty to God, his neighbour, and himself, Tit. ii. 12. Whoso divide these, declare themselves to be unholy persons, who cannot see God. A profane life is a sure evidence of a profane heart, Gal. v. 19. &c.

2. True holiness is not only in external duties, but necessarily includes internal obedience of the soul to the will of God, Psal. xxiv. 3. The outward works of piety and charity will never denominate a man holy, without holy thoughts, affections, and imaginations. The heart must be a temple consecrated to God, wherein, love, fear, delight in God, submission, patience, and all other parts of unseen religion, are exercised. The heart of the holy man is no more the devil's common, where thoughts go free, and lusts range at their ease, Psal. cxix. 113. 'I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love:' but it is God's inclosure, hedged about as a garden for the Lord. And though not without weeds of corruption, it is the holy man's constant work to be labouring to root them up.

3. In true holiness there is a bent, inclination, and propensity of heart, to the acts of obedience to God. The spirit, that is, the new nature, has its lustings, as well as the flesh, Gal. v. 17. By Adam's fall the hearts of men got a wrong set, a bent and propensity to evil, Rom. viii. 7. Hos. xi. 7. Now, in sanctification it is bended the other way, towards God and godliness, 2 Thess. iii. 5. that as the needle in the



compass, touched with a good loadstone, turns towards the north, so the heart, touched by sanctifying grace, inclines Godward and Christward. Whatever actions are done without this, are not holy actions, nor can they please God; for he that sees the heart, will never be pleased with those duties to which the man's heart does not kindly incline; for in effect it is but forced obedience, and he hates robbery for burnt-offering.

4. As the love of God is the great comprehensive duty of holiness, love is the fulfilling of the law; so love runs through all the duties of religion, to give them the tincture of holiness, Heb. vi. 10. And without this, should a man give all his goods to the poor, it profiteth nothing. Where self-love is the domineering principle, their duties are in God's account serving themselves, and not him. Holy duties are the obedience of a child who loves his father, and therefore serves him; not the obedience of a servant, who loves himself, and therefore serves for his wages.

5. True holiness is influenced by the command of God. The will of God is not only the rule, but the reason, of a holy life, John v. 30. Sanctification binds over the soul to the will of God, that it may follow duty, because it is his will. Though a man receive a scripture-truth, if he receive it not because God has said it, but upon principles of reason, his receiving of it is not faith, for that is an assent upon the divine testimony. So if a man do a good thing, but not because God has commanded it, the action is no holy action, Psal. cxix. 115.

6. True holiness has for its chief end the glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. He that is the first cause of all goodness, must needs be the last end of it. And God being the chief good, loves himself above all, and acts for himself. Hence holy persons, being partakers of the divine nature, as they are holy, they will love God above all, and act for him and his glory; for the divine nature, wherever it is, will still move to exalt God above all. So that Sanctification makes a man's actions still centre in God, so far as it does prevail. The want of this mars a man's life and actions, so far as they are not holy, but selfish, Zech. vii. 6.

7. *Lastly*, True holiness is universal. Sanctifying grace seeks through the whole man, and the whole of his course.

(1.) Mortification is universal, Gal. v. 24. 'They that

are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.' The law of God is a chain of many links, and he that draws one to him draws all. He that kills a serpent, not out of any particular quarrel against it, but against the whole kind of them, will set himself to kill all of them that he discovers and can reach; so he that is truly sanctified is set against and endeavours to mortify and kill all sin, as sin, and because it is sin; and every lust and corruption, even the most darling, that he can discover in himself, he will bring forth to execution, and put them all to death. It is no true mortification where one lust is spared. A man in some sickness may lose the power of a leg or an arm: but had it been death, he would have lost the power of all together.

(2.) Vivification is universal, 2 Cor. v. 17. As when the body of Christ was raised, there was life put into every member; so when the soul is raised to live the life of holiness, the image of God is repaired in all its parts, and the soul embraces the whole yoke of Christ, so far as it knows the same. So that sanctification sets a man on every known duty. The holy man is holy in his dealings with God and with men; not a pretender to piety, and a renouncer of honesty. He is holy alone, and holy in company: for though a man can put on or lay by a wooden leg, and carve it as he will, he cannot do so with a limb of his body.

II. I shall shew how this holiness is derived from Christ, according to the grand device of infinite wisdom for the sanctifying of an unholy world. For clearing of which, consider these few things.

1. God made the first Adam holy, and all mankind was so in him, Eccl. vii. 29. He gave him a holy nature, endued with a propensity to good, love to the Lord, and ability to keep all the commands. Thus mankind was set up in Adam; the stock was put in his hand for himself and his posterity, which was to be conveyed to them by natural generation; for no reason can be given why we should not have derived a holy nature from Adam had he stood, seeing we derive a corrupt nature from him having fallen.

2. Adam, sinning lost the image of God, that holiness in which he was created, and turned altogether corrupt and averse to good. For by his sin he turned off from God as his chief end, and set up himself for his chief end, which

could not but infer a total apostasy. He was laid under the curse by his sin, and God the life of his soul departed from him; and so he was left dead in sin, having sinned away his life in the favour of God, and holy influences. So that all mankind are naturally dead in sin, seeing corrupt Adam could convey no nature to us but a corrupt nature, Gen. v. 3. together with the guilt of it, and the curse attending it.

3. Man's sanctification by himself thus being hopeless, for his nature being corrupted wholly, he could never sanctify his own heart or life, seeing no effect can exceed the virtue of its cause; it pleased God to constitute a Mediator, his own Son, to be the head of sanctifying influences to all that should partake of them. And again, he set up the human nature holy, harmless, and undefiled, which was united to the divine nature in the person of the Son. So Christ, God-man, was filled with the Spirit of holiness, and received a holy nature, to be conveyed from him to those that are his by spiritual generation, Eph. ii. 10. And the Mediator being God as well as man, and the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily, there can never be wanting sanctifying influences in him who is a full fountain.

4. Jesus Christ took on him the guilt of all the elect's sins, and the curse due unto them; and these sins of theirs did hang about him till they brought him to the dust of death. But the sufferings of Christ being satisfactory, as he died for sin, so he died to sin, Rom. vi. 10. that is, he was absolutely freed from those sins of the elect wherewith he had burdened himself. This he did and suffered as a public person; and therefore the apostle tells us, Rom. vi. 6. that 'our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' For the guilt of sin and the curse being taken away, sanctification follows of course; that being removed which was the stop of sanctifying influences, and a communication opened betwixt heaven and the soul again, upon its reconciliation with God.

5. Though by the death and resurrection of Christ, the sanctification of his people is infallibly insured, as the corruption of all mankind was by the fall of Adam; yet we cannot actually partake of Christ's holiness till we have a spiritual being in him, even as we partake not of Adam's corruption till we have a natural being from him. And for the effecting of this union with Christ, he in the time of love sends



his quickening Spirit into the soul, whereby he apprehends us; and thus there is a passive reception of Christ. And the soul being quickened, believes, and so apprehends Christ. Thus that union with Christ is made up by the Spirit on Christ's part, and faith on ours. So the soul being united to him, lives by the same spirit of holiness which is in him, and takes of his, and gives to his members for their sanctification.

6. *Lastly*, As Jesus Christ is the prime receptacle of the Spirit of holiness, as the head of all the saints; so the continual supplies of that Spirit are to be derived from him for the saints progress in holiness, till they come to perfection. And faith is the great mean of communication betwixt Christ and us, Acts xv. 9. And thus it does, as it empties the soul of all confidence in itself for sanctification, and relies upon him for it according to his word: putting on the saints to use the means of sanctification appointed by him, yet taking their confidence off the means, and setting it on himself, Phil. iii. 3. And for the ground of this confidence it has his word, so that his honour and faithfulness are engaged for the supply of the Spirit of sanctification this way, being the way in which he has commanded us to look for it.

USE I. Of information. This lets us see,

1. The absolute necessity of holiness. When God, in the depth of infinite wisdom, laid his measures for the salvation of sinners, he had their sanctification in his eye, to bring it about by the death of his own Son. A certain evidence that there is no salvation without it. Nay, it is a principal part of our salvation, Matth. i. 21. There is more evil in sin than suffering, more in man's sin than the wrath of God. Nay, suppose a man saved from wrath, but not from sin, he is a miserable man, because of his unlikeness to God; for as happiness lies in assimilation to God, it must needs be a miserable case to be so unlike him as sin makes us.

2. In vain do men attempt sanctification without coming to Christ for it. Those that knew not Christ might attain to a shadow of holiness, but could never be truly sanctified. And those that hear the gospel, but neglect the great duty of believing and uniting with Christ, can do no duty aright, but their obedience at best is but a hypocritical obedience, Tit. i. 15, 16.

3. Unholiness ought not to stop a sinner from coming to Christ, more than a disease out to hinder a man to take

the physician's help, or cold from taking the benefit of the fire. And they that will have men to attain to holiness before they may believe, are as absurd as one who would have the cripple walk before he use the cure for his lameness.

4. True faith is the soul's coming to Christ for sanctification as well as justification. For faith must receive Christ as God offers him, and he offers him with all his salvation. Now, he is made sanctification: Wherefore the soul, being willing to take Christ with all his salvation, to be sanctified, comes to him for it.

USE II. Of Exhortation. Come then to Christ for sanctification. To press this, I offer the following motives.

*Mot. 1.* If ye be not holy, ye will never see heaven.—Heaven's door is bolted on the unholy, Heb. xii. 14.—There is another place provided for the unholy impure goats.

*Mot. 2.* Ye will never attain holiness, if ye come not to Christ for it. How can ye think to thrive following another device than God's for your end? Ye may do what ye can to reform, ye may bind yourselves with vows to be holy, watch against sin, and press your hearts with the most affecting considerations of heaven, hell, &c. but ye shall as soon bring water out of the flinty rock, as holiness out of all these, till ye believe and unite with Christ. Consider,

1. While ye are out of Christ, ye are under the curse; and is it possible for the cursed tree to bring forth the fruit of holiness?

2. Can ye be holy without sanctifying influences, or can ye expect that these shall be conveyed to you otherwise than through a Mediator, by his spirit?

3. Ye have nothing wherewith to produce holiness. The most skilful musician cannot play unless his instrument be in tune. The lame man, if he were ever so willing, cannot run till he be cured. Ye are under an utter impotency, by reason of the corruption of your nature.

*Lastly,* If ye will come to Christ, ye shall be made holy. There is a fulness of merit and spirit in him for sanctification. Come then to the fountain of holiness. The worst of sinners may be sanctified this way, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Wherefore be persuaded of your utter inability to sanctify yourselves, and receive Christ for sanctification, as he is of-

ferred to you ; and thus alone shall you attain to holiness both in heart and life.



OF THE BENEFITS FLOWING FROM JUSTIFICATION, ADOPTION,  
AND SANCTIFICATION.

ROM. v. 1, 2.—*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

**T**HERE are three sorts of benefits belonging to the justified, adopted, and sanctified. (1.) Some in this life they partake of. (2.) Some at death. (3.) Some at the resurrection. As for those in this life, we are told what they are in that question, ‘What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification? *Ans.* Assurance of God’s love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.’ These are divided into two sorts. (1.) Some that flow from the sense of our justification, &c. (2.) Some from the being of it. Of the former, the Catechism takes notice of three, viz. assurance, peace, joy. All which are held out in the text as benefits coming through justification. Here observe,

1. Justification as a spring of other benefits. It is a leading mercy, it brings many others along with it. In it guilt is removed ; and that being removed, a stream of mercies flows from heaven into the soul.

2. The benefits flowing from it.

(1.) Peace with God, or towards God ; i. e. not only reconciliation with God, the cause of the quarrel being taken away ; but peace of conscience, peace within, when we look towards God, arising from the sense of our justification and reconciliation. But all this is owing to Christ, who brought us into the state of reconciliation, called *this grace wherein we stand*.

(2.) Assurance of eternal happiness: *Rejoice in hope of the glory of God* ; i. e. in the glory of God we hope for. They are so sure of that happiness, that they rejoice in the view of



it, as if they were actually carried into it. And *assurance of God's love*, ver. 5.

(3.) Spiritual joy : *We rejoice in hope of the glory of God*; that is, We glory or joy in the Lord, upon this hope.

The text evidently affords this doctrine, viz.

DOCT. ' Assurance, spiritual peace, and joy, are benefits flowing from a state of justification.'

## I. OF ASSURANCE.

In speaking to the first, namely, assurance, I will shew,

I. The kinds of it.

II. That a child of God may have this assurance.

III. The nature of it, and how a saint comes to be assured.

IV. The fruits of it, whereby it may be discerned from presumption.

V. The necessity of it.

VI. Deduce an inference or two.

I. I am to shew the kinds of assurance. They are two.

1. Objective assurance, whereby the special love of God to a saint, and his eternal salvation, are sure in themselves, 2 Tim. ii. 19. ' The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.'—This is never wanting, whether the child of God know it or not. Though they raze foundations of hope at some times, yet God never razes his.

2. Subjective assurance, whereby a child of God is assured that God loves him with a special love, and that he shall certainly partake of eternal glory, Gal. ii. 20. ' Who loved me, and gave himself for me,' says Paul. This is not a wavering hope, or conjecture, but an infallible certainty. This is the assurance we treat of.

II. I shall shew that a child of God may have this assurance.

1. A believer may know that he has relative grace, that he is justified and therefore shall never come into condemnation, Rom. v. 1, &c. Though he cannot ascend to heaven, and at first read his name in the book of God's decrees; yet by comparing the book of God and the book of his own soul, he may know that he is called and elected, 2 Pet. i. 10. and therefore shall certainly be saved.

2. He may be assured that he has inherent grace, that he

believes as sure as he breathes, 2 Tim. i. 12. that he has love to the Lord unfeigned, and can appeal to Omniscience on the head, John xxi. 15. as Peter did, when he said, 'Thou who knowest all things, knowest that I love thee.' And believing that such are loved of God, and shall certainly persevere, for which he has the testimony of the word, he may be assured that he is the happy man.

3. It is the office of the Spirit of God to assure believers of this. He has given us the word for this end: He is given to lead his people into all truth, particularly to discover the grace of God to them, and in them, 1 Cor. ii. 12. to witness with their spirits to their adoption, Rom. viii. 16. to be a seal, which is properly to ensure an evidence, Eph. iv. 30. and an earnest, a part of the price and pledge of the whole, 2 Cor. v. 5.

*Lastly*, Many of the saints have attained it; as Job, chap. xix. 25. 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, Psal. xxiii. ult. 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.' And others too, besides scripture-saints.

III. I shall shew the nature of this assurance, and how a saint comes to be assured. By what is said, ye may perceive that this is a work of the Spirit, in the hearts of the saints, without whose efficacy no man can attain it. We may take it up in these three things.

1. The Spirit shining on his own word, particularly the promises, in the Bible, the child of God firmly believes them, Heb. vi. 11, 12. The Lord has testified in his word, that such and such persons, for instance, that love him, Prov. viii. 17. are universal in obedience; are poor in spirit, Matt. v. 3. are beloved of him, and shall certainly be saved. The Spirit says in effect, by the light he gives the believer into the divine authority of that word, This is my word. And as such the child of God is firmly persuaded of the certainty of it, as if a voice from the throne of God would make these promises and declarations. This is the ground-work of assurance.

2. The Spirit shining on his own work of grace in the believer's heart, the believer discerns it, 1 Cor. ii. 12. The Spirit of God clears up to the man the truth of grace in him; lets him see that he, for instance, loves God, &c. and so says in effect, This is my work. Hence he is enabled to conclude assuredly, that the Lord loves him, he shall not be ashamed, and that the kingdom of God is his. This assurance is stronger or weaker according to the degree of light that shines upon the work of grace in the heart to discover it.

3. *Lastly*, The Spirit of the Lord sometimes gives a joint testimony with the spirits of the saints, to the truth of that conclusion, Rom. viii. 16. that they are the children of God. The testimony of the believer's own spirit is weak in itself, and Satan can find many ways to invalidate it; therefore the Spirit witnesses to them the truth of the conclusion, whereby they are raised to a full persuasion of it.

IV. I shall shew the fruit of this assurance, whereby it may be discerned from presumption.

1. It inflames the soul with love to the Lord. As one flame begets another, so the assurance of God's love to us will add new vigour to our love to the Lord, 1 John iv. 19. Luke vii. 47. He sits in the warm sunshine, that cannot fail to melt the heart, who sits under evidence of the Lord's love.

2. It is humbling, Gal. ii. 20. None so vile in their own eyes as those who are lifted up in the manifestations of the Lord's love to them, Gen. xviii. 27. 2 Sam. vii. 18. 2 Cor. xii. 4. and 11. compared. Delusion puffs up, but true assurance humbles.

3. It makes one tender in heart and life, and is a most powerful motive to sanctification, 2 Cor. vii. 1. It is followed with great care to please God in all things, and watchfulness against every sin. While the empty traveller walks at random, fearing nothing, because he has nothing to lose, he that has precious things about him looks well to himself, Cant. iii. 5. One may be persuaded, that the confidence which makes not one tender in his duty to God and man, is presumption.

4. Establishment in the good ways of the Lord, 2 Pet. i. 10. Faith is the provisor of all other graces, it brings in oil into the lamp; and the more evidence it has, it can do its office the better. A doubting Christian will be a staggering and weak Christian; as the soldier who has little hopes of



the victory will readily be faint-hearted, while he that is assured is strengthened and established.

5. *Lastly*, It fills a man with contempt of the world, Gal. vi. 14. If ye gaze on the shining sun, for a while after ye will scarcely discern the beauty of the earth. And one's so-lacing himself in contemplation of heaven as his, will sink the value of the world with him.

V. I shall shew the necessity of assurance.

1. It is not necessary to the being of a Christian. One may have true faith, and yet want full assurance, Isa. l. 10. One may go to heaven in a mist, not knowing whither he is going. We read of some, Heb. ii. 15, 'who through fear of death are all their life time subject to bondage.' Our salvation depends on our state, not our knowledge of it.

2. It is necessary to the well-being of a Christian, and therefore we are commanded to seek it, 2 Pet. i. 10, 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' There are none who can live so comfortably for themselves, as the assured Christian, and none are so useful for God as they. It fits a man either to live or die; while others are unfit to live, because of the weakness of grace in a throng of trials and temptations, and unfit to die for want of evidence of grace.

Hence it follows, that assurance may be lost; and they that sometimes have this light, may fall into darkness. And it is careless walking that puts it out, especially sinning over the belly of light, whereby the Spirit is grieved, and withdraws his light, Eph. iv. 29, 30. But if it be lost that way, and darkness come on, it will readily be dreadful darkness; the higher they have been lifted up, the lower readily they are laid, Psal. li. 8.

*Inf.* 1. Unjustified and unsanctified persons can have no true assurance of the Lord's love to them. They may have a false confidence, a delusive hope of heaven; but no assurance, for that is peculiar to the justified.

*Inf.* 2. Doubts and fears are no friends to holiness of heart and life. It is little faith that breeds them in the hearts of the people of God, Matth. xiv. 31. And little faith will always make little holiness.

*Inf.* 3. *Lastly*, Christians may thank themselves for the uncomfortable lives they lead. What sovereignty may do, we know not: but surely it is sloth and unbelief that the want of assurance is ordinarily owing to. Stir up yourselves then

to seek it. Be frequent in self-examination, cry to the Lord for the witness of his Spirit. Believe the word, and be habitually tender in your walk, if ever ye would have assurance, Psal. v. ult.

## II. OF PEACE OF CONSCIENCE.

‘PEACE of conscience is a benefit flowing from justification.’

Here I shall shew,

I. What peace of conscience is.

II. The excellency of it.

III. How it is obtained.

IV. How it is maintained.

V. How it is distinguished from false peace.

VI. *Lastly*, Deduce an inference or two.

I. I am to shew what peace of conscience is. It is a blessed inward calmness and consolation arising from the purging of the conscience from guilt before the Lord, in which description, observe these two things.

1. The subject of this peace. It is a purged conscience, Heb. ix. 14. Peace and purity go together, and make a good conscience, 1 Tim. i. 5. That peace which is joined with impurity, in an unpurged conscience, is but carnal security, peace in a dream, which will end in a fearful surprise. Now, there are two things necessary to the purging of conscience.

(1.) Removal of guilt, in pardon thereof, which brings the sinner into a state of peace with God, Psalm xxxii. 1. Guilt, felt or unfelt, is a band on the soul binding it over to God’s wrath; it is a disease in the conscience, which will make it a sick conscience at length. But a pardon takes away guilt, looses the band, removes the deadly force of the disease, and lays a foundation for carrying off the sickness, Isa. xxxiii. ult.

(2.) Removal of the conscience of guilt, in the sense of pardon, Heb. x. 2. Though a malefactor’s pardon be passed the seals, and he is secured from death, yet till he know it he cannot have peace. So the pardoned sinner, who knows not his mercy, though he has peace with God, yet wants

peace of conscience, Psalm li. 8. So the conscience is purged, when the sting of felt guilt is drawn out of it.

2. The parts of this peace. These are two.

(1.) An inward calm of the soul, and quietness of the mind, wherein it is not disturbed with the fears of God's wrath, nor frightened with the judgments which its sins do in themselves deserve, Prov. i. 33. A troubled conscience is full of fears, of terrible forebodings, and of torments, 1 John iv. 18. When peace enters the conscience, the mist clears up, the fears are scattered, and the conscience has a serenity and quiet within itself.

(2.) Consolation and comfort of heart, 2 Cor. i. 12. Isa. lvii. 19. Peace of conscience is not a mere negative, or indisturbance, which sloth and negligence of soul-matters may procure to the unpardoned: but it is an active cheerfulness of spirit, in the soul's looking up towards God, and reflecting how matters stand betwixt heaven and it, Col. iii. 15.

Conceive the whole thus: Sin entering into the soul, casts the conscience into a fever, and guilt makes the rage of it. The great Physician gives the proper remedy: and so the conscience gets a cool, the sickness is removed, and the man gathers health, strength, and soundness, Job xxxiii. 22—26. Heb. ix. 14.

II. I shall shew the excellency of it. It is Abraham's bosom on this side of heaven, the lower paradise; it is like the shore to the shipwrecked soul; and life from the dead. I will only say three things of it.

1. It is the wine-press of the grapes of heaven, that squeezeth out into the man's mouth the sap of the covenant, Psal. cxix. 102, 103. It was a sad tale of the good Asaph's, Psal. lxxvii. 3. 'I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.' Peace of conscience makes a man remember God, and be comforted; to suck the sap of promises, and all the declarations of God's love and favour in his word, as the same Asaph did, Psalm lxxiii. 24, 25, 26.

2. It is sap and poison to all earthly comforts, Prov. xv. 15. A sick man can take no pleasure in the comforts of life, as a healthy man does. An uneasy conscience sucks the sap out of all. But peace there, makes coarse fare, and little of it, very sweet, Prov. xvii. 1. And whatever a man has, it puts an additional sweetness in it.



3. It is sweet sauce to all afflictions, 2 Cor. i. 12. John xvi. 33. When there is no peace within, little thing makes people fretful : even a scratch of a pin is a wound with a sword. But this makes a man easy in the middle of the little annoyances of the world, though they be great in themselves, Col. iii. 15. Phil. iv. 7. Compare Heb. x. 34. When a man meets with disquietments and vexations abroad, he is helped to bear all, when he is comforted and cheered coming into his own house. But heavy is their case, who come from bitterness abroad, and are met with bitterness at home. The former is an emblem of peace of conscience, the latter an emblem of the soul in afflictions.

III. I am to shew how this peace of conscience is obtained. This peace is peculiar to the saints. Others may have false peace, Luke xi. 21. but they only have, or can have, true peace, Rom. v. 1.

1. It is obtained for them by Jesus Christ dying and suffering to procure it, Isa. liii. 5. Eph. ii. 14. There can be none of this peace without reconciliation with God, and there could be no reconciliation without his blood. The convinced sinners could have had no more inward peace than devils have, if Christ had not died to procure it; but their wound had been incurable, and stood open and gaping for ever.

2. It is obtained by them, by these two methods.

(1.) By a believing application of the blood of Christ, Rom. xv. 13. Job xxxiii. 23, &c. This is the only medicine that can draw the thorn of guilt out of the conscience, and heal its wounds, 1 John i. 7. Medicines prepared by men may cure bodily distempers, and a vitiated fancy, or disordered imagination, among other things. Confessing, mourning, reforming, watching, &c. may give a palliative cure even to the conscience, scurfing over its sores. But nothing but a believing application of Christ's blood will give true peace of conscience; and do what ye will, if ye do not that, ye will never get true peace, Isa. vii. 9.

(2.) By God's speaking peace thereupon to the soul, Isa. lvii. 19. The soul resting on Christ by faith, brings it into a state of peace with God; but for peace of conscience, more is required, namely, a sense of that peace. And this none but God can give, Psal. li. 8. He speaks peace in the word; but a work of the Spirit on the conscience is neces-

sary to make the application, as appears from 2 Sam. xii. 13. compared with Psal. li. And this is a light struck up in the soul, discovering the soul to be at peace with God, an overpowering light that silences doubts and fears, and creates a blessed calm. This also is obtained in the way of believing, in the reflex act of faith.

IV. I shall shew how this peace is maintained. The apostle tells us it was his exercise to maintain it, Acts xxiv. 16. And if we be not exercised in it, it will soon be lost. Now, it is maintained by,

1. Keeping up a firm and settled purpose of heart to follow the way of duty, and to stand aloof from sin, cost what it will, Acts xi. 23. David kept up his peace that way, Psalm xvii. 3. This is the breast-plate of righteousness, Eph. vi. 14. the which if it fall by, one may quickly be wounded to the heart. Unsettledness of heart, one's being at every turn unresolved what to do, cannot miss to leave him in the mire.

2. Living a life of dependence on the Lord, for light and life, direction and through-bearing, Prov. iii. 6. Gal ii. 20. And this will keep a man from presumption, and doing any thing with a doubting conscience, which will soon mar one's peace.

3. Watchfulness against sin, snares and temptations, 1 Cor. x. 12. One that would maintain his peace, must be upon his guard, otherwise it will soon be disturbed, in this evil world.

4. A strict, holy, gospel-walk, in all known duties, towards God and towards man, Gal. vi. 16. He that will adventure to balk any of them, shall soon lose it.

5. *Lastly*, Frequent renewing of our faith and repentance, for purging away the sins we fall into, 1 Pet. ii. 4.

V. I proceed to shew how peace of conscience is distinguished from false peace. A godly man may have a false peace, Cant. v. 2. Such had David before Nathan came to him after his fall. An unregenerate man can have no peace but what is false, Isa. lvii. ult.

1. True peace, built on the ground of God's word, is established by the word, however searching; the other is weakened by it. For God's word is a friend to God's peace, but an enemy to delusion, 1 John iii. 20, 21. But this is meant of God's word rightly understood, (if we misunder-

stand it, it is not his word, but our own mistake); and such mistakes may have the quite contrary effect.

2. True peace cannot be maintained but by a holy tenderness, and constant struggle against sin: but false peace is maintained without it, 1 John iii. 3.

*Inf.* 1. The unconverted sinner, and the untender Christian too, are in a very unfit case for a time of common calamity, Isa. lvii. 20, 21. Matth. xxv. 5. Only the man that has peace of conscience is prepared, Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15.

2. Let all who would have their consciences to be their friends, flee to the blood of Christ, and lead a holy life.

3. *Lastly*, Let those that want it, labour to get it; and they that have it, be exercised to keep it.

### III. OF JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST.

‘Spiritual joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost, is a benefit flowing from justification.’

Now, to shew first of all what spiritual joy is: Joy in general is a pleasing passion, arising from the enjoyment, or hope of the enjoyment of a desired object. Spiritual joy is a joy arising from the enjoyment, and hope of the enjoyment of spiritual blessings.

Here I shall shew,

I. The subjects of this joy, who they are that partake of it.

II. The objects of it, or what they joy in.

III. The grounds of it.

IV. The Author of it.

V. The means the Spirit makes use of to convey it into the hearts of the saints.

VI. The difference betwixt it and the hypocrite’s joy.

VII. *Lastly*, Apply.

I. I shall consider the subjects of this joy, who they are that partake of it.

1. It is peculiar to the saints; for they only are blessed with spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and no others can have true spiritual joy, Phil. iii. 3. Any body may have a sensitive joy, viz. in things grateful to their senses, Acts xiv. 17. Profane men may have a sinful joy, a joy in sin, Prov.



xv. 21. Hypocrites may have a delusive joy, which is a carnal joy in spiritual things, Matth. xiii. 20. But saints only have the true spiritual joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost; for it is peculiar to the subjects of Christ's kingdom, Rom. xiv. 17.

2. Yet the saints have it not at all times, Psal. li. 8. A child of God may be walking in darkness, going mourning without the sun, having no evidence of his interest in Christ: in such a case he cannot have this joy. It is true, there is a seed of joy, in the most bitter sorrows of a spirit, which will spring up in due time, Psalm xcvi. 11. But it seems it may be the case with some of the saints, never to have that joy till they get it in heaven, though I judge it is very rare, especially under the New Testament dispensation, Heb. ii. 15.

II. I shall shew the objects of this joy, what they joy in.

1. The principal object is God in Christ, Phil. iii. 3. Rom. v. 11. They look to and remember God in Christ, and joy in him. God out of Christ is a most terrible object, Heb. xii. ult. 'Our God is a consuming fire.' And a sinner can never truly rejoice in an absolute God. But God in Christ, reconciled to the soul, breathing out peace and love to the sinner through a crucified Redeemer, is the chief and fundamental, the comprehensive object of his joy.

2. The less principal, or secondary object, is twofold.

(1.) The precious spiritual privileges they have in hand, which they enjoy for the present in this life, as justification, adoption, sanctification, peace with God, peace of conscience, access to God and communion with him, &c. In these they justly joy, Isa. lxi. 10. Will a man rejoice in the favour of his prince? Sure then a saint may well rejoice in the favour of his God.

(2.) The precious privileges they have in hope, Rom. v. 2.—'Rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' They have heaven and the eternal weight of glory in view: and this hope makes them sing the triumph before the victory. Yet are they not rash and foolish; for it is a sure hope, and will never make one ashamed. One counts his riches, not only by what he has in hand, but what he has in bills and bonds, and joys in the latter as well as the former.

III. I shall consider the grounds of this joy in these things. They are twofold.

1. A suitableness of the objects to the heart and mind of

the child of God. These objects are the great desire of a believer, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. So the receiving of them in hand, or in hope, makes him to joy, Psal. iv. 6, 7. Without this there can be no joy, Prov. xiii. 12. 'When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.' If ye would make a starving man rejoice, you must give him meat; if a condemned man, a pardon. Holiness and communion with God are sapless to the unrenewed man. God himself is not the object of his desire; neither is the holiness of heaven suited to his mind: therefore he cannot rejoice in these. But it is otherwise with the saints; so strangers intermeddle not with their joy.

2. A sense of an interest in these objects, John xx. 28. 'My Lord, and my God.' One has more joy in his own cottage, than in another's palace, because he can say, It is my cottage. Hagar could not rejoice in the well of water, till the Lord opened her eyes to see it. Though a pardon were slipt unawares into a man's pocket, he cannot joy in it till he knows he has it. So a sense of our interest is necessary to spiritual joy.

IV. I shall next consider the Author of this joy. The Holy Spirit of God is the author of it, and therefore it is called 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' Rom. xiv. 17. i. e. wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, shedding abroad the love of God, in the sense thereof, like a sweet-smelling ointment in the heart of the saint. It is he that administers the reviving cordial to the fainting soul, draws off the saints sackcloth, and girds him with this gladness.

V. I come now to consider the means which the Spirit makes use of to convey this joy into the hearts of the saints. These are twofold.

1. External means are the word and sacraments. These are the wells of salvation to the people of God, Isa. xii. 3.

(1.) The word of God, which brings the glad tidings of salvation from heaven to poor sinners; it discovers the enriching treasure to the soul, Psal. cxix. 162. 'I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.' And no earthly treasure will raise such a joy in one's heart, as a word of promise will do, when the Spirit of the Lord shines on it unto a soul.

(2.) The sacraments, which seal and confirm the word of grace to the soul. This is plain from the exercise of the eunuch, Acts viii. 39. who, when he was baptised, went on

his way rejoicing; and of thousands who have met with that joy at sealing ordinances, which they never could find in all earthly things; and no wonder, for then is the great seal of heaven set unto the covenant betwixt the Lord and his people.

2. The internal mean is faith, Rom. xv. 13. ‘The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.’ 1 Pet. i. 8.—‘Believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.’ Faith receives and applies the glad tidings brought by the word, and confirmed by the sacraments. The Spirit of the Lord works faith at first, and excites and strengthens it: and so the peace which the Lord speaks to his people is firmly believed by the saint, and thus his heart is filled with joy.

VI. I come now to shew the difference betwixt this joy and the joy of the hypocrite. That a hypocrite may have a joy in spiritual things, is evident from Matth. xiii. 20. and is confirmed by the case of many deluded souls, who may have their joys, as well as sorrows, which are unsound as themselves.

1. True spiritual joy riseth in the heart, ordinarily after the word has had a precedent effect on the heart, to rend it for sin, and from it, Psal. cxxvi. 5. ‘They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.’ Matth. v. 4. ‘Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.’ But delusive joy springs up more quickly, while yet the heart is not rent for sin, at least not from it, Matth. xiii. 20. Compare Jer. iv. 3. Much pains the husbandman is at ere he can expect a crop; but weeds will grow up without pain or labour for them.

2. True spiritual joy comes by the word, and that rightly understood; but delusive joy comes either without the word, or by misunderstanding of the word. The channel of divine communications is the word of God, Isa. lix. 21. That joy which comes by pretended revelations, dreams, or impressions, without the word, and regard to it, is most likely to be the effect of a heated fancy; and people had need to beware of being beguiled with these things. The written word is particularly the channel of spiritual joy, 1 John i. 4. ‘These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.’ And if an angel from heaven would speak joy to one whom the written word does not give ground of joy to, it would be but



a deceit, Isa. viii. 20. 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'

3. True spiritual joy is lasting; but delusive joy vanishes away, and comes to nothing, as wanting a root, Matth. xiii. 20, 21. It has a season, and when that is over it is extinguished, John v, 35. 'Ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.' I own a child of God may lose his joy too; but here lies the difference. The ground of the believer's joy, sense of interest, is sometimes removed out of his sight, and so he must needs lose his joy. But though the ground of the hypocrite's joy continue, namely, his fancied interest in the favour of God, and privileges of the gospel, yet the joy goes: those things grow stale and sapless with him, which mightily affected him when they were new to him.

4. True spiritual joy humbles the soul, and fills it with high and honourable thoughts of God; but delusion never ceases to puff up, Gen. xxviii. 17. 'How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' Exod. xxxiv. 8. 'Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.' 2 Cor. xii, 11, Compare Col. ii. 18. For all the divine communications tend to empty men of themselves, to make Christ and his free grace all to a man; and holy familiarity with God impresses an awe on one's spirit, in so far as the more one sees of God, the more he must admire and adore him. But nature will always build up nature.

5. *Lastly*, True spiritual joy is sanctifying, makes one the more tender and holy, the more he has of it. But delusion will never sanctify, Phil. iii. 3. Delusion is a cover to and nourisher of inward lusts, which get a peaceable shelter under it: but true spiritual joy makes one forward in the duties of universal obedience, Psal. cxix. 32. 'I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.' And it makes one tender in moral duties towards God, and towards man.

*Inf.* 1. Unjustified persons cannot intermeddle with this joy, for it is a benefit that flows from justification. It is a privilege peculiar to the saints; children's bread that is not cast to dogs. Ye may rejoice in the worldly comforts ye have, saying, This clothing, this money is mine; but you cannot say, This God is mine.

2. When created streams are dried up, the joy of the ungodly is quite gone : but it is not so with the godly, Job vi. 13. ‘Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?’ Hab. iii. 17, 18. The great ground of the saints joy, and the objects of it, are beyond the reach of men, so that they cannot take them from them.

3. Most groundless is the prejudice against religion, that it is a melancholy thing, Prov. iii. 17. ‘Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.’ None have such reason to rejoice as the believer has. If the poor wretched and condemned creature has more ground to rejoice than he that is pardoned and enriched with his prince’s favour, then the wicked has as much ground to rejoice as the believer who is justified by grace. O! if the ungodly saw their state, they would never rejoice ; and if the godly saw theirs, they would never despond.

4. It is not God’s allowance for his children to harden themselves in sorrow, and refuse to be comforted, Phil. iv. 4. ‘Rejoice in the Lord always : and again I say, Rejoice.’ As it is uncomfortable to themselves, it is dishonouring to God, and is the fruit of unbelief.

5. O, unconverted sinners, let the joy of religion draw you to it. Come to Christ, in a way of believing on him, that ye may be justified. Close with the way of holiness, in renouncing all known sin, and complying with all known duty, that ye may have this spiritual joy, 2 Cor. i. 12.

6. *Lastly*, Let the godly strive to attain this spiritual joy, and to maintain it for God’s honour, and their own comfort and usefulness.



OF INCREASE OF GRACE, AND PERSEVERANCE THEREIN TO  
THE END.

PROV. iv. 18.—*But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

**H**ITHERTO we have spoken of the benefits flowing from or accompanying the sense of justification. I come now to speak of those that accompany or flow from the being of it, namely, increase of grace, and perseverance. In

the text there is an elegant comparison of two things like to one another. Wherein we have,

1. The subjects of the comparison, *the path of the just*, and *the shining light*.

(1.) The subject compared, *the path of the just*. The just, in the language of the Old Testament, are those who are justified by faith, Hab. ii. 4. 'The just shall live by his faith.' They are a travelling company, going towards Canaan; they have a path or way wherein they go, and they make a progress in it. The word here used signifies, (1.) The progress itself, or course in the way, as Job vi. 18. 'The paths of their way are turned aside.' Isa. xxvi. 8. 'In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.' (2.) The place or way through which one goes. The thing meant is the gracious and holy life of the just.

(2.) The subject it is compared to, *the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. It is compared to light, both because it is comfortable to themselves, and instructive, exciting to others, and honourable. It is not like the light of a meteor, that shines a while, and then disappears quickly; nor that of a candle, which burns and burns down till it wastes itself; but like the light of the sun, and not the evening-sun, that declineth, but the morning-sun, that with increasing brightness and heat advances to the meridian.

2. The points of the comparison. (1.) As that light is a growing light shining more and more; so is the grace of God in a soul, going from one degree to another. (2.) As it does not go out, but grows on to the perfect day; so grace never dies out, but goes on till it be perfected in glory.

DOCT. 'Increase of grace, and perseverance, are benefits flowing from or accompanying justification.'

I. Of Increase or Growth of Grace.

Here I shall shew,

1. That real grace doth increase or grow.
2. How a Christian grows in grace.
3. The causes of this growth.
4. The difference betwixt true and false growth.
5. Whether true grace grows always.
6. Apply.

FIRST, I am to shew that real grace doth increase or grow. This is evident from three things.



1. Scripture-testimony. Grace is a holy seed that springs and grows, Mark iv. 27; however little at first, like a grain of mustard seed, Matth. xiii. 31, 32; like leaven, ver. 33. God has promised it, Psal. xcii. 12. Mal. iv. 2. 'But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.'

2. God has appointed a certain stature that his children shall grow to, Eph. iv. 13. This is the perfection of grace. Hence the Christian is first a little child, then a young man, then a father, 1 John ii. 13. They walk, they run, they fly, they mount like eagles, Isa. xl. ult.

3. This is the end of divine influences, Isa. xxvii. 3. and xlv. 3, 4. It is also the effect of divine ordinances, Eph. iv. 11, 12. It is the end of all the pains of the heavenly Husbandman on the plants of his vineyard.

SECONDLY, I shall shew how a Christian grows in grace, He grows four ways.

1. Inward, into Christ, as the branch doth into the stock, Eph. iv. 15. Cleaving to him, and knitting with him more firmly, his faith grows stronger, 2 Thess. i. 9; his love more vigorous, his hope firmer, his dependence closer, &c. This is the spring of all other Christian increase in grace.

2. Outward, in good works, in all the parts of a holy life, piety towards God, and righteousness towards men, Gen. xlix. 22. The growing Christian advances in the work of his salvation, Phil. ii. 12; in the work of his regeneration, Acts xiii. 36. He goes on in the fruits of a holy life, for God's honour, his own good, and for the good and advantage of his fellow Christians, knowing that he is not born for himself.

3. Upward, in a heavenly disposition, Phil. iii. 20. The end of his journey that he is aiming at is the upper world; and as he is coming out of this world, in action so he is coming out of it in affection, Cant. viii. 5. He grows more heavenly in his desires, joys, delights, griefs, sorrows, &c.

4. *Lastly*, Downward in humility, self-denial, self-loathing, resignation to the will of the Lord, &c. The more religion prevails, there are always more of these graces, Job xlii. 5, 6. Psal. xxii. 6. 2 Cor. xii. 11. For the more grace there is, there is the more knowledge of God and one's self; which are two boundless depths, the one of glory, the other of sin.

THIRDLY, I shall shew the causes of this growth.

1. Union with Christ, John xv. 4. 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me.' He that is not united to Christ can never grow in grace, more than a branch that does not knit with the stock. But where the Lord takes hold of the soul by his Spirit, and the soul takes hold of Christ by faith, there is an union whereby they become members of Christ, and their growth is secured.

2. Communion with Christ, John vi. 57. 'He that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' He is the fountain of the saints life, who gives it them, and more abundantly. He is the head of influences, by which they are made to increase in grace, as the sap from the root and stock makes the branches to grow. And this communion they have with him,

(1.) In ordinances, public, private, and secret, so that they are made to grow by the fatness of his house, Psal. xcii. 13. 'Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.' The word edifies them, Isa. lv. 10, 11. The sacraments strengthen and confirm them, as they did the eunuch, who went on his way rejoicing, Acts viii. 39. Prayer and other holy exercises profit them, to their spiritual increase. But all by the influences of his Spirit in them, Isa. xlv. 3, 4.

(2.) In providences. Mercies are blessed to them for this end, Isa. lxvi. 11, 12. crosses, John xv. 2. 'Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' And often have the people of God grown most under the weight of afflictions. But this also is by communion with Christ in them, Phil. i. 19. I know that this shall turn to my salvation—through the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.'

FOURTHLY, I proceed to shew the difference betwixt true and false growth. As hypocrites may have seeming grace, though not real, so that seeming grace may grow, Mat. xiii. 5. There is a twofold difference.

1. True Christian growth is universal, Eph. iv. 15. False growth is only in some particular things. The true Christian grows in all the parts of spiritual life proportionably; for all the graces of the Spirit are linked together, so that when one grows, they all grow. Such a difference there is betwixt them as betwixt a well thriving child and a rickety one.

The former grows proportionably in all the parts, the body, legs, arms, &c. The other grows too, but grows not so; the head grows big, but the body grows not. So the hypocrite may get more knowledge, but no more tenderness, holiness, &c. He is not outwardly, but inwardly cold, as to the life of religion.

2. The hypocrite soon comes to a stand, the Christian goes on to perfection, Luke viii. 14. Phil. iii. 13, 14. They have their measure; and when they have come to that, they stand like the door on the hinges; but the true Christian is going on, labouring to be holy as God is holy, 1 John iii. 3. 'Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.'

FIFTHLY, I am to shew, whether true grace grows always.

1. It does not always grow, nor at every particular season. It has its winters and decays, as well as its spring and growing times, Rev. ii. 4. 'I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' Yet,

2. It never decays utterly, 1 John iii. 9. 'Whosoever is born of God,—his seed remaineth in him.' The flame of it may go out, but there is always a live-coal left, though under the ashes, which the influences of the Spirit will blow up again. It will not always be winter, Hos. xiv. 7. 'They that dwell under his shadow shall return, they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine.'

3. A Christian may be growing, and yet not be sensible of it. If one judge of his case by present feeling, he may be mistaken, Mark iv. 27. If one fix his eyes on the sun, or a tree, he cannot perceive the one moving, or the other growing. But compare the tree with what it was some years ago, the place where the sun now is, with where it was in the morning; so shall ye know the remarkable difference. And the very same difference may be observed in the growth of a Christian.

Again, the growth is not to be measured only by the top, but by the root too. If a tree be taking with the ground, and spreading its roots there, it is surely growing. And though Christians may want the consolations and flashes of affections they sometimes had; yet if they be growing in tenderness, humility, self-denial, &c. it is true Christian growth.



*Inf.* 1. This may cause fear and trembling to,

1. Apostates, who instead of growing are gone back to their former courses of profaneness and impiety. Fallen stars were never stars but in appearance, and fearful will be their doom, Heb. x. 38. 'If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.'

2. Those who are at a stand in the way of religion. They have come up to a form of godliness, and they are like the door on the hinges. They are not striving to be forward in mortification.

3. Those who are growing worse instead of growing better. They are like dead trees; summer and winter is alike to them; they are never the better for all the warnings from the Lord's word or providence: but whatever God says by providences or ordinances, they go on their own way, adding one sinful step to another.

*Inf.* 2. Improve ordinances for spiritual growth. O! it is sad to be sitting under means of grace, but never growing. This is the ready way to provoke the Lord to remove ordinances.

*Inf.* 3. Let the least spark of true grace be nourished, for it will grow, Isa. xlii. 3.

*Inf.* 4. *Lastly*, Labour to be growing Christians.

## II. OF PERSEVERANCE IN GRACE.

'Perseverance in grace is another benefit flowing from, or accompanying justification.'

Here I shall shew,

1. What this perseverance is.
2. How it is to be understood.
3. That the saints shall persevere to the end.
4. What are those things which make hypocrites fall away, but over the belly of which saints persevere.
5. The grounds of the perseverance of the saints.
6. The means of perseverance.
7. *Lastly*, Apply.

FIRST, I shall shew what this perseverance is. To persevere is, to continue and abide in a state into which one is brought. And this perseverance is a firm and constant continuance in the state of grace, even to the end of one's life,

Matth. x. 22. Col. i. 23. It is opposed to total apostasy, and utter falling away from grace. It is continuing and holding on, joined to a good beginning.

SECONDLY, I am to shew how this perseverance is to be understood.

1. It is not to be understood of all who profess Christ. Hypocrites may be seeming saints, and may have seeming grace, which may blaze for a while, and afterwards be quite extinguished, totally and finally lost, John vi. 66.—There are temporary believers, who continue for a while, but having no root, do wither quite away, Matth. xiii. 21. Mere outside Christians, and Christians in the letter, may so apostatise, as to lose all, and never recover.

2. It is to be understood of all real saints, those who are endowed with saving grace. Those who, by virtue of regeneration, may call God their Father, as well as the church their mother, shall abide in his family, and never fall out of it, John viii. 35. Though the counterfeit of grace may be utterly lost, yet real grace cannot. We own,

(1.) Saints may lose the evidence of grace, so that they cannot discern it in themselves. Thus it may suffer an eclipse, Isa. l. 10. Sometimes a child of God not only believes, loves, &c. but knows he does so: but at other times it may be out of his sight, so as he may apprehend he has none. The jewel may fall by, though it cannot fall away; and the spiritual husband may lock up himself in his chamber from his spouse, though he never quite leaves the house.

(2.) Saints may lose the exercise of grace, Cant. v. 9. Though the holy fire be not quite put out, yet it may cease to flame for a while; though they have spiritual armour lying by them, they may be so benumbed with the prevailing of corruption, that they cannot wield it. Wise virgins may slumber and sleep as well as the foolish.

(3.) They may lose much of the measure of grace they have had. True grace, though it cannot die out, yet is subject to languishing and decays in the strength thereof, Rev. iii. 2. They may lose much of their love to God, and one another, Rev. ii. 4. much of their former tenderness, as David's heart smote him when he cut off the lap of Saul's garment, but afterwards was guilty of murder and adultery; much of their liveliness in duties, Rev. iii. 2. and so of other graces. But,

(2.) Saints can never lose grace finally, so as never to recover it, 1 Pet. i. 5. John vi. 39. No doubt a child of God may stray away from the Lord, as well as another; but though a servant may go, and never return to the house, yet a son will be sought out and brought back again, Psalm cxix. ult. John xiii. 35. 'And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth ever.' So however far the saints may go wrong, the Lord will recover them.

(2.) Saints never lose grace totally neither; they never lose it altogether, though for ever so short a while, 1 John iii. 9. Their lamp may burn dim, but it is never quite put out; they may fall back, fall very low, so as themselves and others may have little hopes of their recovery, but they never fall off, never fall away, Psal. xxxvii. 24. 'Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.'

Both these hold true of relative grace; that is, there is no falling out of the state of justification, adoption, union with Christ, peace with God, the love of God, &c. and of inherent grace, faith, love, the fear of God, &c.

THIRDLY, I proceed to shew that the saints shall persevere to the end. This is evident from,

1. The Lord's own promises. He has said it, and will he not do it? John x. 28, 29. Psalm cxxv. 1. 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.' It is true they have many enemies that watch to do them mischief, but the Lord has promised to guard them, Isa xxvii. 3. 'I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' They may fall into sin, and provoke the Lord to anger against them; but he has promised, that though he lay his hand on them, he will not lift his love off them, Psal. lxxxix. 31,—34. Though they may be forsaken, yet it shall neither be total nor final, Isa. liv. 7,—10.

2. From the saints confidence of perseverance and eternal life. How confident was Asaph, Psal. lxxiii. 24. 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory? If the saints could fall away from grace, how could they 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God? Rom. v. 2. How could Paul triumph over 'death, life, angels, principalities, powers; things present and to come, height, depth,' &c.? Rom. viii, 38, 39. Confidence in their own



management, is not the way of the godly. Prov. xxviii. 26. 'He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.'

3. *Lastly*, According to the scripture, perseverance is a discriminating mark betwixt the elect and non-elected, Matt. xxiv. 24. as also betwixt real saints and hypocrites, Luke viii. 13, 14, 15. 1 John ii. 19. From whence we may gather, that the utter apostasy of the elect saints is impossible in respect of the decree of God; that those who get true grace, keep it to the end, while others lose theirs; and that they who utterly apostatise, never were true saints.

FOURTHLY, I shall shew what are those things which make hypocrites fall away, but over the belly of which saints persevere. In the general, there are three things.

1. Satan's temptations, 1 Pet. v. 8. He is a subtle, powerful and malicious enemy, a liar and murderer from the beginning. Whatever hopeful signs are found about any, he sets himself to rob them of them, for their ruin. He seeks to set the hypocrite and the sincere through the wind, and prevails to blow away the one, but not the other. By a miracle of grace, the saints are preserved amidst his fiery darts, Luke xxii. 32.

2. The world's snares. While professors are in the world, there are snares to catch them, and carry them off the way. (1.) The world's prosperity is a great snare, and makes many apostates, Prov. i. 32. and xxx. 9. But true grace will hold out against it, Cant. viii. 7. (2.) Its adversity. Tribulation and persecution offends the temporary believer, and makes a scattering among Christ's summer-friends, Matth. xiii. 20, 21. But the true Christian will weather out the storm, Job xvii. 9. 'The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.' Poverty strips many of their religion, but not a true saint, Rev. xiv. 4. (3.) The example of the world; the torrent of an ungodly generation strips many of their form of godliness, Matth. xxiv. 12. 'Because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold.' But the saints shall not be carried away with the stream, Psal. xii. 7. 'Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.'

3. *Lastly*, The corruptions and lusts of the heart. These betray the hypocrite into apostasy, Jer. iv. 3. Compare Luke viii. 14. Lusts lulled asleep for a while, but not mor-

tified, rise up and make shipwreck of many souls. But true grace is never quite expelled by the flesh's lustings against it; but by the power of God is preserved, like a spark of fire in the midst of an ocean.

FIFTHLY, I proceed to shew the grounds of the perseverance of the saints.

1. The unchangeable decree of God's election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of the Father to them. Electing love is free love, and also unchangeable, Jer. xxxi.

3. 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' And God's purpose of grace and salvation cannot be disappointed, 2 Tim: ii. 29. 'The purpose of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.'

2. The merit and intercession of Christ the Son. He redeemed them by paying a full price, which must be lost if they be lost, 1 Pet. i, 18, 19. And 'he ever liveth to make intercession for them,' Heb. vii. 25.

3. The perpetual abiding of the Spirit in and with them, John xiv. 16. which secures their union with Christ, and the preservation of the seed of grace, 1 John iii. 9.

4. *Lastly*, The nature of the covenant of grace, which is furnished with such pillars as the first covenant had not, namely, the promises of perpetual conservation in the state of grace, Jer. xxxii. 40. 'I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.'

SIXTHLY, I shall shew the means of perseverance. Let none think that they may live carelessly, having once got grace, because it cannot be lost: for besides, that one's giving himself quite up to such an opinion and course is inconsistent with saving grace, God has joined together the ends and means, and none shall separate them, Acts xxvii. 22. 'And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.'—Compare ver. 31. 'Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' Now, in the general, these are,

1. God's ordinances and providences. He makes use of both to keep the feet of his saints, John xv. 2.

2. The duties of religion, and exercise of the graces, faith,

fear, watchfulness, &c. 8. Cor. x. 12. 'Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

I shall conclude with a few inferences.

*Inf.* 1. Would ye have a treasure which ye cannot lose? then get grace. Ye may lose your worldly treasures, comforts, and enjoyments; the world's good things may go.—But grace is durable.

9. Take heed to yourselves, and beware of apostasy; for it is not the beginning well, but holding on to the end, that will secure your salvation, Matth. x. 22. 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' Beware lest Satan, the world, and your lusts, give you up your foot, and ye lose all ye have wrought, 2 John 8.

3. As ever ye would persevere, look well to the foundation of your religion; for sincerity will last, but hypocrisy is a disease in the vitals that will end in death. The builders endeavour to lay the foundation fast and securely, and then they are sure that the superstructure they raise upon it shall stand firm. Therefore lay the foundation well, and ye may be assured that the building shall weather all storms.

4. *Lastly*, Let those whose care it is to be found in Christ, and to live to him in all the duties of piety and righteousness, be comforted amidst all their temptations, snares, and corruptions, in that God who has begun the good work, will perfect it, Phil. i. 6.



#### OF THE BENEFITS WHICH BELIEVERS RECEIVE AT DEATH.

PHIL. i. 21.—*To me—to die is gain.*

**A**LL must die; but as men's lives are very different, so their account in death is also. To an ungodly man death is a loss, the greatest loss: but to a believer it is gain, the greatest gain.

Paul was now a prisoner in Rome, and his case in itself was doubtful whether it would terminate in life or death, (though he was assured it would not be death at that time, ver, 25.) But having taken a view of both, he does, in the text, in his own person, give us, (1.) The sum of a believer's life, that is, Christ. As all the lines drawn from the cir-



cumference meet in the centre, so the whole of a believer's life in Christ, his honour being the scope of all. (2.) His estimate of a believer's death; he will not be a loser, but a gainer by it: it brings him in many benefits, and so as a gainful exchange.

The doctrine of the text is,

Doct. 'Death is gain to a believer.'

In discoursing this doctrine, I shall shew,

I. In what respect death is gain to believers.

II. How it comes to be gain to them.

III. Deduce an inference or two.

I. I am to shew in what respects death is gain to believers. It is so in respect of their souls and their bodies.

FIRST, In respect of their souls. It separates their souls from their bodies, but not to their loss, but to their gain.—It is with the souls of believers at death, as with Paul and his company in their voyage, Acts xxvii. The ship broke in many pieces, but the passengers came all safe to land. So when the eye-strings break, the speech is laid, the last pulse beats, the last breath is drawn, the soul escapes, and gets safe away out of the troublesome sea of this world, into Immanuel's land. Now, there is a twofold gain or benefit which the souls of believers receive at death, namely perfection in holiness, and immediate entering into glory.

First, Perfection in holiness, Heb. xii. 23.—'The spirits of just men made perfect.' In regeneration the elect get a new nature, which is a holy nature, 2 Pet. i. 4; but much of the old nature still remains. Then grace is planted in them by the Spirit. It grows up in the gradual advances of sanctification; but at death it is perfected, they are made perfectly holy. This perfection consists in two things.

1. A perfect freedom from sin, Eph. v. 27. The spiritual enemies they see to-day, they shall never see more, when once death has closed their eyes. Many a groan and struggle there is now to be free of sin, but still it hangs about the believer. Sometimes he gets his feet on the neck of his lusts, but they rise up again upon him: therefore he is never in safety to let down his watch, or to lay by the sword of the Spirit. The spiritual bands are never quite off here; but then it will be said, 'Loose him and let him go.' At death the saints shall be free,

(1.) From all commission of sin, Rev. xxi. 27. In the

earthly paradise, sin was found, there Adam broke the whole law; but into the heavenly paradise no sin can enter. Not a vain thought shall ever go through a believer's heart more; there shall be no more temptation to sin, nor the least inclination to it.

(2.) From the very inbeing of sin. The body of death shall go out with the death of the body, and then shall the desire be answered, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Sin's reigning power is broken in sanctification; yet it still abides as a troublesome guest; but at death it is plucked up by the roots. It is like the house under the law infected with the leprosy, for the removal of which the stones were carried into an unclean place.

(3.) From a possibility of sinning, Rev. iii. 12. 'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.' The first man in paradise, yea, the angels in heaven till they were confirmed, were but as reeds liable to be shaken with the wind of temptations as the doleful event made appear. But by death putting an end to the believer's probationary life, he becomes a pillar in the temple of God, which can never more be moved.

2. In the arrival of their holiness at the highest pitch they are capable of, Eph. iv. 13. Now every sincere soul has a perfection of holiness in respect of the parts thereof; they are like little children who have all the parts of a man, but none of them grown to their utmost pitch; but then they will have a perfection of degrees, answering to the holy law in all points, like men who are come to their full growth. Sincerity shall then be turned to legal perfection.

(1.) Their understandings shall be perfectly illuminated, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 'For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.' There shall then be no more complaints of weakness of knowledge in them who in their life were the weakest of all saints. There shall not be the least remains of darkness there, but a full sunshine shall be in them.

(2.) Their wills shall be perfectly upright, so that they shall will nothing but what is good, and that without the least bias to the other side, Rev. xxi. 27. A perfect conformity shall then be betwixt God's will and theirs, without the least possible jarring, 1 John iii. 2.

(3.) The executive faculty shall then perfectly answer their will, readily and with all imaginable ease and delight, Matth. vi. 10. Now the believer is often in the dark, he knows not what to do. Sometimes when he knows his duty, he has no will to it ; there is a great aversion and backwardness that he has to strive with. Oft-times, when he would fain do it, he cannot, Matth. xxvi. 41. ‘The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ But then there shall be no more such impotency; he will be able to do whatever he will, and will nothing but what is good.

*Secondly*, Immediate entering into glory. As Pharaoh’s jailor opening the prison-door to the butler, let him out into the court; so death letting the soul out of the body, it goes to glory. Christ said to the thief on the cross, ‘This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,’ Luke xxiii. 43. So death is to them the beginning of an immortal life; a strait entry by which they go out into the heavenly paradise; the ship by which they are transported into Immanuel’s land. Here consider,

1. The glory they enter into. They pass after death into,  
*1st*, A glorious place, namely, heaven, the seat of the blessed, 2 Cor. v. 1. It is Christ’s Father’s house, where their room is ready for them, when they have no more place on earth, John xiv. 2. ‘In my Father’s house,’ says Christ, ‘are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you.’ The place which has no need of the sun and moon, but the glory of God lightens it, Rev. xxi. 23. Behold the outside bespangled with sun, moon, and stars; how glorious must it be within!

*2dly*, A glorious society, namely, the society of other saints gone before them, ‘The general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven,’ Heb. xii. 23. the society of the holy angels, *ib.* the society of the glorious Mediator, his Father, and Holy Spirit, even the blessed Trinity, John xvii. 24. Heb. xii. 23, 24. It is a glorious society they are admitted into.

*3dly*, A glorious state. This is ‘the house in the heavens, eternal, not made with hands, 2 Cor. v. 1. It is a glorious state the soul enters into, a glory God puts on the souls of believers when out of the body. It is what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of



man to conceive ; it is what we cannot make language of.—It is a state of rest and perfect blessedness.

2. That they immediately after death pass into it, and do not abide any where else, and sleep until the day of judgment, as some profane men would have it, is clear. For,

(1.) Scripture instances plead this. So to the thief upon the cross it was said, ‘This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,’ Luke xxiii. 43. So of Lazarus it is said, that ‘he was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom,’ Luke xvi. 22. And if it be a parable, as most likely it is, it is the more full to the purpose. And there is the same reason for all the saints as for one, they being all as ready at death as ever they will be, working-time for preparation being then over, John ix. 4.

(2.) There is no middle state ; but when the saints put off the body, they put on glory, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. When they are ‘absent from the body,’ they are ‘present with the Lord,’ ver. 8. When they ‘depart,’ they are ‘with Christ,’ Phil. i. 23. When they die, they ‘enter into peace’ and rest, Isa. lvii. 1. the ‘rest remaining for the people of God,’ Heb. iv. 9.

(3.) *Lastly*, The contrary doctrine is utterly inconsistent with the blessed state the scriptures ascribes to believers after death, Rev. xiv. 13. ‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours.’ And it is inconsistent with believers their desire of death, that they may be with Christ in glory, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. Phil. i. 23. What was to make Paul in that strait ? if he could not be with Christ before the general judgment, he would have chose rather to have lived till then, that he might have been with him in some sort, than to have died.

SECONDLY, In respect of their bodies, death is gain.—They must lie down in a grave ; but death,

1. Cannot harm them, nor bring them to any real loss to be lamented. For,

(1.) Their dead bodies are still united to Christ. Though it separate their souls from their bodies, it cannot separate them from Christ, even every part of their body from another, 1 Thess. iv. 14. They are members of Christ still, though in a grave, Rom. viii. 11. ‘Our friend Lazarus is dead,’ said Christ.

(2.) They cannot be held there for ever. It is but till the resurrection, Job xix. 26. The saints dust is precious, locked up in the grave as a cabinet, till the Lord have further use for it. They are his precious fruit, that lie mellowing in the grave, and ripening for a glorious resurrection.

2. It is a real gain to them, in respect their graves are the places of their rest; not their prison, but their beds of rest, wherein they are to rest till the morning of the resurrection. The soul is the man, and it enjoys the glory of heaven; mean while the body rests in the grave, where it will enjoy a profound and tranquil repose, till it be united to the soul at the time when the dead in Christ shall rise from their long sleep.

II. I come to shew how death comes to be gain to them. It is a rest,

1. From all the ordinary troubles and afflictions of this life, Rev. xiv. 13. forecited.

2. From all persecutions and hardships from men for the cause of Christ, Job viii. 17. 'There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.'

I shall conclude it with a few inferences.

*Inf.* 1. That the saints may be encouraged and stirred up to press after perfection in holiness, since they shall certainly obtain it at length, Phil. iii. 13, 14.

2. The wicked shall come to a perfection, so to speak in their wickedness, and immediately pass into hell, Luke xvi. 22, 23.

3. There is no purgatory nor middle state betwixt heaven and hell.

4. The toils and troubles of the world, that find men in the way of the Lord, should not discourage them, or carry them off their way, since they will all soon have an end.

5. There is no reason to mourn as those that have no hope for the death of godly relations, 1 Thess. iv. 13.

6. *Lastly*, A dying day is the best day for a believer that is in all his life, Eccl. vii. 1. 'Tis their marriage, home-coming, and redemption day.

## OF BENEFITS AT THE RESURRECTION.

HEB. xi. 35.—*That they might obtain a better resurrection.*

**I**N this chapter the apostle brings in a cloud of witnesses to the truth and excellency of religion, and the power of faith, shewing the great things faith can do, and also can suffer. In this verse we have an instance of each kind. (1). Faith got back the dead, in the case of Elijah and the widow of Sarepta's dead son, 1 Kings xvii. 22, 23. and of Elisha and the Shunamite's son, 2 Kings iv. 35, 36. Herein the faith of the prophets, and the faith of the women too, was active, though the former was more strong than the latter. (2.) Faith made constant martyrs, helped them to bear most cruel tortures even to death, refusing deliverance on sinful terms; which seems to respect the martyrs of the Jewish church under Antiochus Epiphanes. What carried them up was the faith of a better resurrection. Hence two things they had the faith of.

2. Of a resurrection, that there would be a resurrection of the body; that they and their enemies, and all mankind, after death, would rise again.

2. Of a resurrection for themselves, better than that deliverance from death which their enemies offered them.—They saw by an eye of faith a glorious resurrection abiding them and all the people of God, attended with so many glorious benefits as might counterbalance their heaviest sufferings.

The text affords this doctrine, viz.

DOCT. 'Believers shall obtain a resurrection from the dead, attended with such glorious benefits, as the faith of the same may animate them to endure the most cruel sufferings for Christ.'

Here I shall,

I. Touch a little on the doctrine of the resurrection in general.

II. Consider the resurrection of believers, that better and glorious resurrection.

III. Apply.

I. I shall touch a little on the doctrine of the resurrection in general. And I shall shew,



1. That there shall be a resurrection of the dead.
2. Who shall be raised.
3. What shall be raised.
4. The Author of the resurrection.

*First*, I am to shew, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead. This is a fundamental article of the Christian faith, the denying whereof is subversive of the foundation of Christianity, 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14. 'But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' It is a point of faith which we owe to revelation, that reason must assent to as highly reasonable when proposed, Acts xxvi. 8. Two things are the causes of men's disbelieving it, ignorance of the scriptures, and the power of God, Matt. xxii. 29. Accordingly there are two things that will clear it.

1. God is able to raise the dead ; the resurrection is within the compass of the almighty arm. Man dying, his soul does not die ; and though his body be dissolved, it is not reduced to nothing ; if it were, God could make it over again. But the particles which make up the body do remain. And,

(1.) Omniscience knows what they are, and where they are. If the dust of a thousand generations were jumbled together, Omniscience can separate them. An expert gardener having a hundred different seeds in his hand, can distinguish betwixt seed and seed ; and why not an omniscient God betwixt dust and dust.

(2.) Infinite power can join them altogether which belong to one man's body, and so make it up what it was, and join the soul again to the body raised up, Luke i. 37. He made the world of nothing, and he can reform man's body of pre-existent matter. As the watchmaker takes down the watch, and sets every piece in its proper place, so can God man's body.

3. God has positively told us, that he will do it, John v. 28, 29, and vi. 39. Acts iv. 2.

*Secondly*, I proceed to shew, who shall be raised. Here two things are to be observed.

1. Those who shall be alive at the coming of Christ, as they shall not die, so they cannot rise from the dead. They

shall undergo a sudden change, whereby the qualities of their bodies shall be altered, so as it shall be to them instead of death and resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

2. All that ever had life and died, men and women, old and young, godly and ungodly, shall rise again, Acts xxiv. 15. Rev. xx. 12. If they once had a soul united to their body, though the belly was their grave, they shall partake of this resurrection. The sea and the earth are God's stewards, which shall then be called to give back what they got a-keeping.

*Thirdly*, I shall shew, what shall be raised. The self-same bodies for substance that died, shall be raised again, though with very different qualities; yet it shall be the very same body that was laid in the grave, and not another. For,

1. The scripture is very plain for this. It is 'this corruptible *that* puts on incorruption, and this mortal *that* puts on immortality,' Cor. xv. 53. 'Though after my skin (says Job), worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,' Job xix. 26.

2. The equity of the Judge requires it. An equitable judge does not suffer one to fight and another to get the reward; and therefore he will make those bodies which are the temples of grace, the temples of glory. Nay, they are Christ's members, and so cannot perish. Neither can it be that one body sin, and another suffer in hell.

3. The nature of resurrection requires it; for that would not be a rising again, but a new creation. Death is sleep to the godly, the resurrection an awaking, a change of the vile body, Phil. iii. 21.

*Fourthly*, I come now to shew, who is the author of the resurrection. It is the work of God alone, and above the power of any creature whatsoever. It is one of those works that are common to the Trinity. To the Father, 1 Cor. vi. 14. 'God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power;' The Son, John v. 28. 'The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his [*Christ's*] voice.' The Holy Spirit, Rom. viii. 11. 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.'

II. The second general head is, to consider the resurrection

of believers, that better and glorious resurrection. And this I shall do, 1. In itself. 2. In its consequents.

FIRST, I shall consider the resurrection of believers in itself, and here I shall shew,

1. Some things that ensure the blessed resurrection of believers.
2. How they shall be raised.
3. In what case they shall rise.
4. The particular qualities of their bodies at the resurrection.

*First*, I shall take notice of some things that ensure the blessed resurrection of believers.

1. God's covenant with believers, which is with their whole man, comprehending their bodies as well as their souls, which by virtue thereof are temples of the Holy Ghost, Matth. xxii. 32. 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living.'

2. The end of Christ's death, which was to destroy death, Hos. xiii. 14. 'O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.' How else would be accomplished his swallowing up death in victory, if death kept those that are his for ever? No; this is the last enemy, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. And when the resurrection comes, and not till then, will that victory be complete, ver. 54.

3. The resurrection of Christ. He was the first-fruits from death, his people the harvest that must follow, 1 Cor. xv. 22, 23. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.' He rose as a public person, and so has got up above death in their name, Eph. ii. 6. 'Hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'

4. Their union with Christ, Rom. viii. 11. forecited. He has redeemed their bodies as well as their souls, and therefore they expect the redemption of their bodies, Rom. viii. 23; and has united them to himself, Eph. v. 30. Now, since the head liveth, the members shall live too; as when the head gets above the waters, the members follow.

*Secondly*, I am to shew, how believers shall be raised. The wicked shall be raised by the power of Christ as a just Judge. The divine power that shut them up in the grave as in a prison, will bring them out, in order to their receiving the last sentence, to enter into the prison of hell.



But the godly shall be raised by virtue of the Spirit of Christ, that bond of union betwixt Christ and those blessed bodies; so that it shall be to them as a pleasant awakening out of sleep. As an awakening man draws his limbs to him, so will their raised head draw them to him out of their graves, Com. viii. 11.

*Thirdly*, I shall shew, in what case they shall rise.

2. Happily, as rising to life, eternal life, when others rise to their eternal ruin, Dan. xii. 2. That will be the happiest day that ever their eyes saw. The day of their death was better than that of their birth; but they of their resurrection will be the best of all.

2. Joyfully, Isa. xxvi. 19. 'Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust. That is the day wherein Christ's bride rises out of her bed for the marriage. Jonah had a joyful outgoing from the whale's belly, Daniel out of the den, and Pharaoh's butler out of the prison: but what are all these to the joys at the resurrection of believers? Their doubts and fears died, and lay down with them, but they shall not rise with them. When the soul comes out of heaven, and the body out of the grave, what a joyful meeting will there be of the blessed couple!

3. Gloriously, being made like unto Christ's glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. However mean they were while in the world, or ignominiously treated in life or in death, they shall have a glorious resurrection.

*Fourthly*, I shall shew, what shall be the particular qualities of the bodies of believers at the resurrection. The bodies of the saints shall be raised.

1. *Incorruptible*, 1 Cor. xv. 42. Now the members of their living bodies, are liable to corruption, when they die all putrefying together; but then they will never more be liable to putrefaction; never more liable to sickness, death, nor the least pain, to wearing or wearying. There will then be no outward violence, no inward cause of uneasiness.

2. *Glorious*, ver. 43. The most hard favoured saint will outstrip the now greatest beauty. The seat of that beauty will not be the face only but the whole body, Matth. xiii. 43. There shall be no defects nor deformities in those bodies; Isaac shall no more be blind, nor Jacob halt; Leah shall not be tender eyed, nor Mephibosheth lame of his legs.

As the artificer melts down the mishapen vessel, and casts

it over again in a new mould; so doth the Lord with the bodies of the saints.

3. *Powerful and strong*, ib. There will be no more feebleness and weakness. The weak shall be as David, and the house of David, shall be as God. They shall be able to bear out in continual exercise without wearying, and to bear the weight of glory, which the flesh and blood of a giant would now be too weak for.

4. *Lastly, Spiritual*, ver. 44. That is, like spirits. (1.) In that they shall need none of the now necessary supplies of nature, meat, drink, &c. Mat. xxii. 30. full without meat warm without cloaths, healthful without physic. (2.) Active and nimble like spirits. So they shall meet the Lord in the air, and like so many eagles gather together, where the carcase is.

*Inf.* 1. Fearful will the doom of persecutors be. (2.) The saints may be encouraged to suffer for Christ. (3.) Faith and holiness is the best way to beauty. (4.) Let this allay the believer's fear of death, Gen. xvi. 3, 4. (5.) Let this comfort him against sickness of body; (6.) and under the death of godly relations. (7.) Rise from sin, and glorify God with your bodies and souls.

SECONDLY, We are now to consider that better resurrection in the consequents thereof, or what shall follow thereupon, the which the martyrs in this text had in their view.

Here I shall shew,

1. The consequents thereof before the judgment.
2. At the judgment.
3. After the judgment.

*First*, I shall shew the consequents of this better resurrection before the judgment. There are two benefits which believers shall have from Christ betwixt the resurrection and the judgment. We left them raised up out of their graves in glory. Now,

1. They shall be gathered together from all corners of the earth by the ministry of angels, Mat. xxiv. 31. By the glorious gospel having its efficacy on them, they were separated from the world in respect of their state and manner of life, but still abode among them as to their bodily presence. and some of them at a great distance from the rest: but then they shall not only be visibly distinguished from the reprobate by the shining glory upon them, while the faces of the

rest are covered with blackness ; but these fair ones shall all be gathered together into one glorious company, out from among the wicked, by the ministry of the holy angels, Matth. xiii. 48, 49.

2. While the wicked are left on the earth, they shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, 1 Thess. iv. 17. Those who are found alive, and those who are raised out of their graves, shall ascend in one glorious body ; by what means, the Lord himself knows ; but he who made Peter walk on the water, can cause them make their way like eagles through the air. And they shall meet the Lord there to welcome him at his second coming, while others shall be filled with dread of the Judge and also to attend him for his honour, as the angels also do.

Who can sufficiently conceive the glory of these benefits, by which their happiness is so far carried on ?

*Secondly.* We shall view the consequents of this resurrection at the judgment.

The throne being erected, and the glorious man, Christ, the Judge of the world, being set down upon it, and the parties sisted before him to be judged, the wicked as well as the godly.

1. The glorious company of believers, being separated from the black howling company of the wicked in that day, shall be set on the right hand of the Judge, while the wicked shall be set on his left hand, Mat. xxv. 32, 33. They shall then have the most honourable place ; and then will there be a mighty turn ; many of the right hand-men of the world will get the left hand, and contrariwise.

2. They shall be openly acknowledged by Jesus Christ, their Lord and Judge, Mat. x. 39. Consider,

*1st,* What it is for Christ to acknowledge them. It is to own them for his own, to acknowledge the relations they stand in to him, Mal. iii. 17. ‘ They shall be mine,’ i. e. owned to be so. To the wicked he will say, he ‘ knows them not ;’ he will reject all their pretensions to him : but as for believers, he will own and acknowledge them in all the relations wherewith faith invested them ; he will acknowledge the fair company for his contracted spouse, his children, his members, even them, and every one of them.

*2dly,* How he will acknowledge them then. He will do it openly, most publicly and openly. Consider here.



(1.) Our Lord Jesus acknowledges all that are his, even now in this life, not only in his own breast, by looking on them as his; but before his Father, in whose presence he appears making intercession for them as his own, John xvii. 9, 10. He does it also by the testimony of his Spirit to their sonship, Rom. viii. 16; by the seal of his own image set upon them, and by many signal appearances of his providence for them.

(2.) He will then acknowledge them in a quite other and open manner, before many witnesses, so as men and devils shall be obliged to understand, that these are they whom the King on the throne delights to honour. He will do it before his Father, and the angels of heaven, Rev. iii. 5. in effect saying to his Father, 'Behold me, and the children thou hast given me.' He will acknowledge them in their own hearing, and the hearing of all the world, Matth. xxv. 34.

3. They shall be openly acquitted by the Lord in that day, by the sentence solemnly passed in their favour, whereby also they are adjudged to life, Matth. xxv. 34. 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Consider here,

1st. What they shall be acquitted from. They shall be acquitted from all the guilt of all their sins, and for ever discharged from all punishment for them, Acts iii. 19. The mouths of all accusers shall be finally stopt, and the white stone shall then be given in a way of eminency.

2dly, Are they not acquitted now? Yes, they are in the first moment of believing acquitted of the guilt of eternal wrath for ever, Rom. viii. 1; and on their fresh application to the blood of Christ for their after sins, they likewise are blotted out, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.' And at death they get their acquittance too, Heb. ix. 27. Yet at the general judgment they are acquitted likewise.

3dly, Wherein doth their acquittance now and at that day agree and differ.

(1) They agree, [1.] In the substance of the acquittance, which is the same now and hereafter, from the guilt of sin, and punishment thereof. [2.] In the ground of it; it proceeds in both upon the merits of Christ, Eph. i. 7. and no

on works, which are brought in at the last day as evidences of their faith, not as causes of their justification.

(2.) They differ, [1.] In respect of openness. Now they are acquitted in the world, Rom. viii. 1. where yet they have much ado to read it sometimes; in their own consciences, 1 John iii. 21. which they themselves only can understand; but then from the throne, in the presence of angels and men. [2] In respect of assurance and comfort. Of the former a believer may doubt, but not of the latter. [3.] In respect of fulness. In the last day they are acquitted from all effects of sin whatsoever, their bodies being raised, never to die more: and joined to their souls, never to be separated more; but not so in the former.

4thly, Why shall they be openly acknowledged and acquitted at the last day? He will do it,

(2.) To wipe off, with his own fair hand, all the foul aspersions which the hypocrites and profane did cast upon them in this world, Isa. lxvi. 5. Many a time the Lord's dearest children are made to lie among the pots, blackened with ill names, reproaches, &c. But then they shall be 'like doves whose wings are covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold.'

(2.) To give them a reward of grace, for their confessing of him before the world, cleaving to his truths and ways, in the midst of an adulterous generation, and their not sustaining to deny him on whatever temptations, Matth. x. 32. 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.' Compare 2 Tim. ii. 12, 'If we deny him, he also will deny us.' The prospect of this made the martyrs cleave to him in the face of cruel deaths.

(3.) To seal the end of all their own doubts, jealousies, and fears, 1 Cor. iv. 4. Many a time it is a question with the believer, whether he belongs to Christ or not: even when he has in all sincerity embraced the covenant, yet these like so many ghosts haunt him. No doubt by that time they will all be gone, but by this acknowledgement their departure will be sealed.

(4.) For the increase of their joy, and the shame of their enemies, Isa. lxvi. 5.

4. They shall be adjudged to everlasting life, and solemnly invited to enter to the possession of the kingdom, Matth.

xxv. 34. 'Come ye,' &c. in which every word has a weight of glory.

5. *Lastly*, They being themselves absolved, shall be honoured to be Christ's assessors in judging of the wicked, 1 Cor. vi. 1. 'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?' They shall judge them by way of communion with Christ their head, this work being a part of the Mediator's honour redounding to all his members: By way of approbation of the Judge's sentence against them, saying Amen to the doom of the wicked, even the godly parent to that of the wicked child, the holy husband to that of the unholy wife, &c. Rev. xix. 1, 3. See Rev. iii. 21.

*Thirdly*, We shall consider the consequents of the resurrection after the judgment. Believers shall be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity: Here I shall shew,

1. Wherein perfect blessedness lies.

2. What shall make believers perfectly blessed.

1. I am to shew wherein perfect blessedness lies. It lies in two things.

1st, Freedom perfectly from all evil whatsoever, whether of sin or misery. Thus blessed shall believers be then, perfectly free from sin, Eph. v. 27. and free from suffering any manner of way, Rev. xxi. 4:

2dly, Full satisfaction to all the desires of the soul, Phil. xvi. 11. Their desires shall be fully satisfied; they shall have that beyond which they can crave no more. For where there is any want, there can be no perfect blessedness.

2. I am to shew what shall make them thus perfectly blessed. It is the enjoyment of God. They shall have his glorious presence with them, Rev. xxi. 3. They shall see him as he is, 1 John iii. 2. the man Christ with their bodily eyes, and the invisible God with the eyes of their minds, called the beatific vision, the most perfect knowledge of God which the creature is capable of. They shall be knit to him gloriously, Rev. xxi. 3. just quoted. Love then will be at its height. And they shall enjoy him to their full happiness.

(1.) Immediately; not in the use of means and ordinances, but there they sit down at the fountain-head, Rev. xxi. 22.

(2.) Fully; God will withhold nothing of himself from them: they shall be stinted to no measure but what their



own capacity makes ; and in him they shall have what will satisfy all their desires.

3. *Lastly*, Eternally, 1 Thess. iv. 17. ‘ So shall we ever be with the Lord.’

I conclude this subject with a few inferences.

*Inf.* 1. Come out now from among the wicked world. A separation there will be betwixt the godly and the wicked. If it be in your favour, it will begin now. Leave them now, if ye would not be left with them after the resurrection.

2. Beware of rash judging those that have any lineaments of Christ’s image upon them. Ye may judge and condemn the evil actions of the best of men, if ye be sure from the word that they are evil. But, O my soul ! enter not into the secret of those who presumptuously take upon them to judge men’s state, hearts, and consciences, upon slips of human infirmity and weakness.

3. Let none be ashamed to own Christ and his truths and ways before the world, remembering that the day cometh in which he will confess those that confess him, and deny those that deny him.

4. Though the day of judgment be an awful thought, it will be a happy day to believers, as they will then be forever delivered from all moral and penal evils, and admitted into the greatest felicity in the enjoyment of their God and Redeemer for ever.

5: That there is no true happiness till we come to the enjoyment of God, nor full happiness till we arrive at the full enjoyment of him.

6. *Lastly*, Miserable is now, and at the resurrection will be, the state of the wicked, where the reverse of all the happiness of the saints will be found, and that in the most dreadful manner. Let us then all seek to be found among those who shall be partakers of the better and glorious resurrection.

## OF THE DUTY WHICH GOD REQUIRETH OF MAN.

1 SAM. XV. 22.—*And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?*

THIS text is a reproof given to one that wore a crown, teaching him, that though he was Israel's sovereign, he was God's subject. Saul had been sent, by God's express command, on an expedition against the Amalekites, with a solemn charge utterly to 'destroy all that they had, and spare them not; but to slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camal and ass,' ver. 3. The expedition was crowned with success. Saul having destroyed all the people, took Agag their king prisoner, and saved the best of the cattle; and when quarrelled by Samuel for this his partial obedience to the heavenly mandate, he pretended that the people had spared the sheep and oxen, which had been devoted to destruction as well as the people, to sacrifice unto the Lord in Gilgal. The words of the text contain Samuel's answer to this silly apology: *Hath the Lord* (says he) *as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?* importing, that obedience to the voice and will of God is more acceptable to him than all the sacrifices in the world.

In the words we may notice,

1. The duty which God requires of men, which is *obedience*. This is required of man, of all men, rulers and ruled: those whom others must obey, must obey God.

2. What they are to obey, *the voice of the Lord*, whereby he manifests his will: it is his revealed will, whatever way he is pleased to notify it to them. Hence obedience in the text is called *hearkening*; the sould first receiving the knowledge of God's mind, and then complying with it.

3. The excellency and eminency of this duty.

(1.) God delights in it.

(2.) All other things must yield to it, but it to none. Burnt-offerings and sacrifices, even the fat of them, are nothing in comparison of this.

The text affords the following doctrine, viz.

DOCT. 'The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to his revealed will.'

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall,

I. Explain it; and,

II. Deduce a few inferences for application.

I. For explanation, let us consider the duty which man owes to God, of whom he requires it, the rule of it, the properties of it, and on what accounts we owe it.

*First*, Let us consider the duty which man owes unto God. That is obedience. We are in a state of subjection to God. He is our superior, and his will we are to obey in all things. He is our King, and we must obey him as his subjects, by complying with all his statutes and ordinances. He is our Father, and we must shew him all respect, reverence, and affection, as his dutiful children. He is our Lord and Master, and we must yield him the most cheerful and unlimited service, as is our reasonable duty. He is our supreme Lawgiver, and we must receive the law at his mouth, every law and precept, every ordinance that is stamped with his authority, whatever is superscribed with a 'Thus saith the Lord,' readily obeying it.

*Secondly*, Let us consider of whom the Lord requires this duty. Of every man without exception, capable of knowing his will. The greatest are as fast bound to this obedience as the meanest, the poor as well as the rich, Pagans as well as Christians, kings as well as subjects. No man can be free from this duty more than he can be a God to himself. Not a son or daughter sprung from Adam can plead an exemption from this duty of obeying the will of the Lord. It is an easy yoke wreathed upon the necks of all, and is imposed on them by an indispensable law.

*Thirdly*, Let us consider the rule of that obedience. It is the will of God. His will is our supreme law. Not the secret will of God; for that which God never revealed to man, cannot be his rule; but the revealed will of God, Deut. xxix. 29. 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children. Men may fulfil the secret will of God, and



determination of his providence, and be deeply guilty, as we see the Jews did in crucifying the Lord of glory, Acts ii. 23. under the guilt of which heinous sin that people groan to this day. But conformity to God's revealed will is our duty. Whatever is revealed in the sacred scriptures as the will of God, whether relating to what man is to believe, or what he is to practise, is to be performed and done, and that at our peril.

*Fourthly*, Let us consider the properties of this obedience which God requires of man.

1. It is sincere obedience to his will. Hence David says, 'I was upright before him,' Psal. xviii. 23. Hypocritical obedience may please men, but not God, the searcher of hearts. It was the commendation of the obedience of the Romans, that they 'obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered them,' Rom. vi. 17. That sacrifice that wants the heart, will never be accepted on God's altar. God weighs not the affections of his people to him by their actions, so much as their actions by their affections, as in the case of Abraham's offering up Isaac, Heb. xi. 17.; in that of the Israelites offering to go into the promised land, Num. xiv. 40. compared with ver. 42, 44. which was an act of downright disobedience to the commandment of the Lord, notified to them by Moses. All obedience, without uprightness or sincerity, is a mere counterfeit, an empty pretence, which will be rejected with abhorrence.

2. It must be constant obedience. We must 'keep God's law continually, for ever and ever,' as the Psalmist resolved to do, Psal. cxix. 44. Man is ever doing something, yet he must always abide within the hedge of the law. Our obedience to God is all wrong when it comes only by fits, as heat in an ague, or is broke off like those that go to sea for pleasure, who come ashore when the storm rises. God is unchangeable, and we must be constant and steady in obeying his will; at no time daring to act contrary to it.

3. It must be tender obedience. We must 'abstain from all appearance of evil,' 1 Thess. v. 22. We must 'hate even the garment spotted with the flesh,' Jude 23. We must not rub on this hedge, nor come too near the borders of wickedness. We have to do with a jealous God, whom whorish looks will offend, Ezek. vi. 9. We cannot be too nice in obedience. We must not, in order to practice, exa-

mine whether it be a little or a great sin. All such distinctions are highly criminal, and inconsistent with the disposition of the person of a tender heart, who hates every sin of every kind, whether great or small, the wicked act as well as the wicked thought. A tender, a relenting heart, a heart afraid of sin, and cautious of the least wrong thought or act, is that which God requires, and the obedience resulting from it is the tender obedience here required.

4. It must be ready obedience, like that of those of whom the Psalmist speaks, 'As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me,' Psal. xviii. 44. We must do, and not delay; but be like the good David, who said, 'I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments,' Psal. cxix. 60. We are not to dispute, but obey; 'not to confer with flesh and blood,' Gal. i. 16. It was Jonah's sin that he did not readily comply; and it was Abraham's commendation, that he did not dispute God's orders, but 'went not knowing whither he went,' Heb. xi. 8. The least intimation of God's will, either as to doing or suffering, must be immediately and readily complied with, notwithstanding all discouragements and carnal reasonings. God's call and command must drown the voice of carnal ease, and all arguments arising from *Spare thyself*: Does God say? we must immediately go whither he directs us: does he say, Come? we must instantly obey the summons, saying, Lord, we are here, ready to do what thou pleasest to order or enjoin us. Without this readiness and alacrity, all our obedience is stark naught, a matter of mere force and compulsion; and therefore unacceptable to the great God, whom we are bound to serve with a perfect heart and a willing mind.

5. It must be universal obedience, Psal. cxix. 6. in 'having a respect unto all God's commandments.' The whole of the commands of God have the same divine stamp upon them. They are one golden chain: whoso takes away one link, breaks the chain; if the connection be destroyed, the whole machine falls asunder. Hear what the apostle James says on this head, chap. ii. 10, 11. 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.' Obedience to one command will never sanctify disobedience to another.

The contempt shewn to one is a contempt of the one Law-giver who appointed the whole. Hear what Christ, the glorious Legislator of the church, hath said on this article, ' Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.' Thus the transgressing of one of the least of God's commandments, if any of them can justly be called such, is a breach of the others, however great and important, and that because the authority of God, that gives sanction to the whole, is slighted and contemned. Whoso makes no conscience of any one known duty, discovers hypocrisy in the rest.

6. It must be absolute obedience, like that of Abraham, who, when called to go out into a place which he was not acquainted with, went accordingly, ' not knowing whither he went,' Heb. xi. 8. Subjects are obedient to magistrates, people to pastors, wives to husbands, children to parents ; but absolute obedience is due to none but God : for we are to call no man father upon earth, Matt. xxiii. 9. If their commands be contradicted by God's, they are not to be obeyed ; but though God's commands be contradicted by all the world, we must obey them, as the disciples refused to obey the commands of the Jewish council, in not preaching in the name of Jesus, because they clashed with the orders of their exalted Master, Acts iv. 19. The most unreserved and unlimited obedience is due to the will and command of the great Lord of heaven and earth, and that without exception or reserve, say to the contrary who will.

7. *Lastly*, It must be perfect ; though now in our fallen state we cannot give any obedience that deserves that epithet. God may and does require of all men in whatsoever state, Matt. v. ult. ' Be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Though he accepts sincere obedience from those that are in Christ, yet he requires of them perfect obedience, and every imperfection is their sin. Though he has not suspended their justification on their perfection, yet it is what they naturally owe to God, whose law is perfect, and must have a perfect obedience performed to it, either by man himself or his surety. The believer, sensible of his utter incapacity to perform such an obedience to the holy law of God, renounces all his own sinful and imperfect, though sincere obedience, and betakes himself to the complete obedi-



ence of his Surety, and presents it as his own to God, which he accepts:

In short, all true and acceptable obedience to the will of God flows from a right principle, that of faith and love in the heart. Faith is the hand that unites the soul to Christ, and obedience to God is the fruit of that union. Love is the spring and source of it ; for he that loveth Christ, keepeth his commandments. And it must be directed to a right end, namely, the glory of God. We are not to obey God, in order to stop the mouth of a natural conscience, or gain applause among men, but to grow more like God, and bring more honour and glory to him.

*Fifthly*, Let us consider on what accounts do we owe this obedience to God. On these principally, viz.

1. Because he is our great and glorious Creator, to whom we owe our life and being. He is our Lord, and we are his subjects ; he is our Master, and we are his servants. And therefore it is just and right that we should obey him, and conform to his will. He is every thing that speaks an authority to command us, and that can challenge an humility in us to obey. Man holds all of God, and therefore owes all the operations capable to be produced by those faculties, to that sovereign power that endued him with them. Man had no being but from him, and he hath no motion without him : he should therefore have no being but for him, and no motion but according to his will. To call him Lord, and not to act in subjection to him, is to mock and put an affront upon him. Hence it is said, ‘ Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say ? ’ Luke vi. 46.

2. Because he is our chief end, the chief and last end of all being. The Lord hath made all things for himself ; and of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. His glory should be the ultimate end of all our actions, and the mark to which they should all be directed. He gave being to all things, that they might shew forth his praise. All the brute creatures, things animate and inanimate, do this in a passive manner ; but men and angels, who are rational agents, are bound to do this actively ; and they are designed by God for this very end and purpose.

3. Because he is the conserving cause of all. As he gave man a being, so he upholds and preserves him therein, by his mighty power. The preservation of the creatures is as it

were a continued creation ; and in order to it there is necessary a continual exertion of divine power, and a constant efflux of providential influence, without which they could not move and act at all. As therefore the life and motions of men depend entirely upon God as their upholder, so that life and those motions should be employed for promoting his glory, and promoting his will.

4. Because of the eminency of his nature, which founds his supreme dominion over us. God is the most glorious and excellent of all beings, and the source and spring of all other beings whatsoever. He is possessed of all perfections in an infinite and transcendent manner. Whatever perfections, excellencies, and amiable qualities, are scattered among the creatures, they all unite in him in the utmost perfection, and in him they shine with the most resplendent glory.— And therefore he has a just title to the homage and obedience of all his creatures.

5. Because he is our good and gracious Benefactor, from whose bountiful hand all our mercies do flow. It is in him that we live, move, and have our being. Our health, strength, time, and all blessings, spiritual or temporal, that we enjoy, are the fruits of his goodness and providential care. Now, this lays strong obligations upon us to serve and obey him. We find the Lord aggravating the rebellion of the Jews from the care he had taken in bringing them up, and their miraculous deliverance from Egypt, Isa. i. 2. ‘I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me,’ which clearly implies, that the benefits he had bestowed upon them were strong obligations to an ingenuous observance of him ; and we find him threatening to deprive them of the blessings he had bestowed upon them, and to bring great distress upon them for the neglect of this duty, Deut. xxviii. 47, &c.

6. *Lastly*, Because he is our Governor and supreme Lawgiver. He is a Lawgiver to all, to irrational as well as rational creatures. The heavens have their ordinances, Job xxxviii. 33. All the creatures have a law imprinted on their beings, but rational creatures have divine statutes inscribed on their hearts, as Rom. ii. 14, 15. ‘When the Gentiles, which have not the [written] law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves ; which shew the work of the law written in

their hearts.' And they have laws more clearly and fully set before them in the word. The sole power of making laws does originally reside in God, Jam. iv. 12. 'There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.' He only hath power to bind the conscience. And therefore to him obedience is due from all to whom he has prescribed laws.

I come now to deduce some inferences.

*Inf. 1:* Does God require from men obedience to his revealed will? Then, in whatsoever state a man is, he owes obedience to the will of God; and therefore, in the saddest of sufferings, even in hell, men properly sin against God,—For this obedience is founded on the natural dependence of the creature on its Creator, and the creature can no more be free of it than it can be a god to itself. Much more God's exalting men in the world gives them no allowance to be vile. Whatever men's state be, God requires of them obedience to his will therein; and they are rebels if they withhold it, and shall be dealt with as such accordingly.

2. The doing of what God does not command can be no acceptable service or obedience to God. Our duty to God is not to be measured by our imaginations, but by the revealed will of God. Therefore, when men make those things to be duties which no revelation from the Lord makes to be so, the Lord may well say, 'who hath required these things at your hand?' Nothing but what is commanded of God can lawfully be the object of our duty.

3. Those who never heard the gospel will not be condemned for their not believing it; for the revelation of God's will must go before our actual obligation to do it, Rom. ii. 12. 'As many as have sinned without law, [that is, the written or revealed law of God] shall also perish without law.' This ought to stir up all who bear the Christian name, to be vigorous and lively in obeying God, particularly the great command of believing in the name of his Son; as considering, that whosoever doth not so obey and believe the gospel, shall be damned, Mark xvi. 16.

4. All men are allowed for themselves to examine the will of their superiors, whether in church or state, to see whether it be not against the will of God; and if it be so, not to obey it, 1 Cor. x. 15. The Bereans were commended for so doing, Acts xvii. 11. There is a difference betwixt



subjection and obedience. These two may be separated in our dealings with men that are our superiors; we may and must refuse obedience to them in evil actions, while subjection to them remains in other things. Thus the apostles shewed subjection to the Jewish rulers, while they refused to obey their unlawful commands, Acts iv. 8, 9, 19. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, when they in any respect clash with his written word. To obey men's unlawful commands, is to sin against God. But in our relation to God, we owe him both subjection and obedience in all things.

5. Let us remember then, that we owe a duty to God, and that is, that we obey his will. Let us therefore lay out ourselves to do his will, and give that sincere, constant, tender, ready, universal, and perfect obedience to him in all things which he requires, looking for acceptance with God through the merits and mediation of Christ; praying to him, that he may graciously forgive all our acts of disobedience, and cover our very imperfect and sinful obedience with the perfect and complete obedience of his Son, who fulfilled all righteousness in the room of his people.

6. *Lastly*, Let believers be excited to yield this obedience to the will of God, as they have the most noble encouragement thereto, namely, That whatever God requires of them as an article of duty, there is a promise of ability and strength for the performance thereof contained in his word. Thus he says, Ezek. xxxvi, 27. 'I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.'—The Lord puts no piece of service in the hands of his people, but he will afford them sufficient supplies of grace for the doing thereof. Let them not, then, decline any duty he lays before them.

## THE MORAL LAW, THE RULE OF MAN'S OBEDIENCE.

ROM. ii. 14, 15.—*For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shews the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.*

**T**HE apostle here shews three things. 1. That the *Gentiles have not the law*; that is, the law of Moses, or written law. They want the scriptures. 2. That yet they have a law within them, they are *a law unto themselves*; they have the natural law, which for substance is all one with the moral law. Only it is less clear and distinct, and wants the perfection of the moral law written; several points thereof being, through the corruption of nature, obliterated in it. 3. How they have it. It is not of their own making, nor by tradition, but they have it by nature derived from Adam. *The work of that law is written in their hearts*; it is deeply inscribed there, and cannot be erased; it is such a work as tells them what is right and what wrong; so their consciences, by virtue thereof, excuse their good actions, and accuse the evil.

Now, this natural law is nothing else but the rubbish of the moral law left in the heart of corrupt man: from whence we gather, that the moral law in its perfection was given to Adam in innocence, while we see the remains of it yet with those of his posterity, who have not the advantage of the written law.

The doctrine arising from the words is,

DOCT. 'The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.'

*First*, It is here supposed, that man always was and is under a law: for being a rational creature, capable of obeying the will of God, and owing obedience to his Creator by virtue of his natural dependence upon him, he behoved to

be under a law. The beasts are not capable of government by a law, because of the imperfection of their nature: so those that will be lawless, seeing they cannot lift up themselves to the throne of God, who has no superior, they do in effect cast down themselves to the condition of beasts, whose appetite is all their rule. Indeed all the creatures are subjected to laws suitable to their various natures. Every thing has a law imprinted upon its being. The inanimate creatures, sun, moon, and stars, are under the law of providence, and under a covenant of night and day. Hence it is said, Psalm cxlviii. 6. 'He hath established them for ever and ever, he hath made a decree which shall not pass.' They have their courses and appointed motions, and keep to the just points of their compass. Even the sea, which is one of the most raging and tumultuous creatures, is subjected to a law. God hedges it in as it were with a girdle of sand, saying to it, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,' Job xxxviii. 11. But much more are rational creatures subject to a law, seeing they are capable of election and choice. Man especially, being a rational creature, is capable of and fitted for government by a law; and seeing he is an accountable creature to God, he must needs be under a law.

*Quest.* How could man be under a law, before the law was given by Moses, for we are told, that the 'law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,' John i. 17?

*Ans.* Before the law was given at Sinai, all the race of Adam had a law written in their hearts, even the light of reason, and the dictates of natural conscience, which contained those moral principles concerning good and evil which have an essential equity in them, and the measures of his duty to God, to himself, and to his fellow-creatures. This was published by the voice of reason, and, as the apostle says, Rom. vii. 12. was 'holy, just, and good.' *Holy* as it enjoins things holy, wherein there is a conformity to those attributes and actions of God, which are the pattern of our imitation. *Just*; that is, exactly agreeable to the frame of man's faculties, and is most suitable to his condition in the world. *Good*; that is, beneficial to the observer of it; for, 'in keeping of it there was great reward. And thus Adam in the state of innocence had the law of God written on his heart; and



therefore it is said, Gen. i. 27. that ‘ God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.’ This image consisted in the moral qualities and perfections of his soul. He was made after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. The Lord imparted to him a spark of his own comeliness, in order to communicate with himself in happiness. This was an universal and entire rectitude in his faculties, disposing them to their proper operations. But of this I spoke largely, when discoursing of the creation of man.

*Secondly,* There are three sorts of laws we find in the word.

1. The ceremonial law, which was given by Moses. This bound only the Jews, and that to the coming of Christ, by whom it was abrogated, being a shadow of good things that were then to come: a hedge and partition-wall betwixt them and the Gentiles, which is now taken down.

2. The judicial law, which was the civil law of the Jews, given also first by Moses, by which their civil concerns were to be regulated, in respect of which the Jewish government was a Theocracy. What a happy people were they under such a government! Yet does it not bind other nations farther than it is of moral equity, being peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of that nation.

3. The moral law, which is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, binding all men to perfect obedience thereto in all the duties of holiness and righteousness. The ceremonial law was given to them as a church in their particular circumstances; the judicial law as a state; but the moral law was given them in common with all mankind. But of these laws I spoke more largely in a preceding discourse.

*Thirdly,* This moral law is found, 1. In the hearts of all men, as to some remains thereof, Rom. ii. 15. There are common notions thereof, such as, That there is a God, and that he is to be worshipped; that we should give every one his due, &c. Conscience has that law with it which accuses for the commission of great crimes, Rom. i. ult. This internal law appears from those laws which are common in all countries for the preserving of human societies, the encouraging of virtue, and the discouraging of vice. What standard else can they have for these laws but common reason?

The design of them is to keep men within the bounds of goodness for mutual commerce. Every son of Adam brings with him into the world a law in his nature; and when reason clears up itself from the clouds of sense, he can make some difference between good and evil. Every man finds a law within him that checks him if he offends it. None are without a legal indictment, and a legal executioner, within them. This law is found, 2. In the ten commandments summarily. 3. In the whole Bible largely. This is that law which the carnal mind is enmity against in the natural man, which is written over again in the heart in regeneration, Heb. viii. 10; and that was fulfilled by Christ in the room of the elect.

*Fourthly*, As to the revelation thereof, we may consider three special seasons thereof.

1. It was revealed to Adam in innocency, and to all mankind in him. Not by an audible voice, but it was written in his heart; the knowledge of it was concreated with his pure nature; his understanding was a lamp of light, whereby he plainly saw his duty as it was revealed to him.

Note, (1.) That it is a part of the moral natural law, that man is to believe whatever God shall reveal, and obey whatever he commands. Accordingly God did reveal to him the symbolical law of the forbidden fruit, for the trial of him; and then the law so extended was the rule of his duty.

(2.) God added to this law a promise of life upon obedience, and a threatening of death upon disobedience. So it was cast into the form of a covenant, called 'the covenant of works.' This prohibition was founded upon most wise and just grounds. As, first, to declare God's sovereign right in all things; and, next, to make trial of man's obedience in a matter very congruous to discover it. For if the prohibition had been grounded on any moral internal evil in the nature of the thing itself, there had not been so clear a testimony of God's dominion, nor of Adam's subjection to it. But when that which was in itself indifferent became unlawful, merely by the will of God, and when the command had no other excellency but to make his authority more sacred, this was a confining of man's liberty, and to abstain was pure obedience.

2. It was revealed to the Israelites again upon mount Sinai in ten commandments. For Adam having fallen, and so

man's nature being corrupted, the knowledge of this law was darkened, howsoever the godly patriarchs kept up the knowledge of it. But in Egypt they had lost much of the sense of it, which made it necessary to be renewed.

3. By Jesus Christ and his apostles, the law was again revealed to the world, the knowledge of it being then much lost among the Jews as well as the Gentiles. And now we have it comprehended in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

*Fifthly,* As to the properties of it, it is,

1. An universal law, binding all men, in all places, and at all times, Rom. ii. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles, &c.*

2. It is a perfect law, comprehending the whole of man's duty to God, and to his neighbour. There were no new duties added to it by Christ, for it was perfect before. So says the Psalmist, Psal. xix. 7. 'The law of the Lord is perfect.'

3. It is indispensable and perpetual, Luke xvi. 17; 'It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail,' Matt. v. 18; 'Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'

*Lastly,* For what use is the law revealed? I answer,

1. It was revealed at first, that man by obedience to it might be justified; but now it is not revealed for that end, seeing no man by obedience to it can obtain justification: For 'that the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,' Rom. viii. 3. 'Since the fall no mere man can attain happiness by the law; for all are guilty of sin, and cannot possibly yield that perfect obedience which the law requires. 'For there is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not,' Eccl. vii. 20. 'In many things we offend all.' Yet it is of use,

(1.) To all men in general. It is of a threefold use.

[1.] To let all men know what the holy will of God and their duty is, Micah vi. 8. 'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'

[2.] To let all see their inability to keep it, and so to humble them in the sense of their sin. 'By them,' says



David, 'is thy servant warned. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults,' Psal. xix. 11, 12.

[3.] To give them a clear sense of their need of Christ. 'Wherefore serveth the law?' saith the apostle. 'It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made,' Gal. iii. 19. And says the same apostle, ver. 24. 'The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.' And it brings men to Christ, (1.) As it convinceth them of their sin. The prohibitions of the law convince men of their sins of commission; and the injunctions of it convince them of their sins of omission. Hence says the apostle, Rom. iii. 20. 'by the law is the knowledge of sin,' Rom. vii. 7. 'I had not known sin but by the law,' &c. There are many things which men had never reckoned sins, unless the law of God had discovered them. (2.) By discovering unto them the dreadful wrath and curse of God that is due unto them for their sins. It tells them, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' Gal. iii. 10; (3.) By awakening their consciences under a sense of their guilt, and apprehensions of their misery, and begetting in them bondage and fear, whereby they are brought to a clearer sight of their need of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.

(2.) To the unregenerate: Particularly it is,

[1.] For a looking-glass to let them see their state and case, by convincing them, that 'by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin,' Rom. iii. 20; and so to bring them to Christ, who has wrought out a perfect righteousness for their justification.

[2.] For a bridle to hold them in with its commands and threatenings, who otherwise would regard nothing. 'The law (says the apostle) is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners,' &c. 1 Tim. i. 9.

[3.] For a scourge, vexing and tormenting their consciences, and making them uneasy in a sinful course, rendering them inexcusable, and laying them under the curse.

(3.) To them that are in Christ. It serves,

[1.] To magnify Christ unto them, shewing them their obligation to him for fulfilling it in their stead. 'O wretch-

ed man that I am! (says the apostle); who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,' Rom. vii. 24, 25. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,' Gal. iii. 13, 14.

[2.] To be a rule of life unto them, wherein they may express their gratitude by obeying the law of Christ. So the law leads to Christ as a Redeemer from its curse and condemnation, and he leads back to the law as a directory, the rule and standard of their obedience to him.

*Object.* But does not the apostle say, Rom. vi. 14. 'Ye are not under the law, but under grace?' and Gal. v. 22, 23. 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, &c.—against such there is no law?'

*Ans.* Believers are not under the law as a covenant of works, to be either justified or condemned thereby. For the apostle says, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13; and that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.' They are neither under the commanding nor the condemning power of that law, seeing Christ has given perfect obedience to it as a covenant of works, so that under that character it can have nothing to demand of them; and has fully satisfied all its demands in point of punishment, having suffered the very penalty threatened therein. So that as a covenant of works they are entirely delivered from it. And as to the fruits of the Spirit in them, they are the product of the Spirit, agreeable to the will and law of God; and no law can be against them, seeing they are agreeable to the very letter and spirit thereof. But believers are still under the law as a rule of life, according to which they are to regulate their hearts and lives. It is the pole star that must direct their course to heaven, and is of singular use to provoke and excite them to gratitude to Christ, who hath perfectly fulfilled it in their room and stead.

I shall conclude with drawing a few inferences from what has been said.

*Inf.* 1. That the Pope is Antichrist, and that man of sin, who shews himself as if he were God, by commanding things

contrary to and inconsistent with the moral law, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. The Papists add canons and traditions to the moral law, as if it were in itself an imperfect rule of manners. This is taxing God's wisdom and goodness, as if he knew not how to make his own laws, or would not give a sufficient and complete rule to his creatures. This is a provoking sin in the sight of God; and a most dangerous thing it is to add to or impair his holy law. See Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

2. Is the moral law the rule of our obedience to which we ought to conform ourselves in heart and conversation? Then what ground of reproof is there here to many among you? Are there not many who cast God's words behind their backs, and trample upon his commandments? Some set up their carnal wisdom, as the standard and rule of their actions, and regulate themselves by the dictates of their corrupt reason. Others subject themselves to the law of their lusts and passions. They study to fulfil the desires of their fleshly mind, and to gratify their sensual appetite; but have no regard to the holy law of God. They break all these cords, and cast all the divine commands from them. This their way is their great sin and folly, exposés them to the wrath of God, and sooner or later will bring down Heaven's vengeance on their guilty heads.

3. It is necessary the law be preached, in order to convince men of their sin, and inability to yield perfect obedience to it, that they may betake themselves to Jesus Christ, who hath fulfilled all righteousness for every one that will come to him for deliverance from sin and the wrath to come. It is necessary to be studied and known by all who would attain to true holiness both in heart and life, which principally lies in a sincere and upright obedience to the whole law of God, in dependence upon the grace that is in Jesus Christ. The law is a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path; and the more they study it in its spirituality and extent, the more vigorously will they press after conformity to it.

4. Let us remember we are under a law in whatever case we be; and therefore our actions are a seed that will have a proportionable harvest. And there will be a day of judgment, wherein every man's works, and actions will be narrowly examined. Let us therefore study to conform our-



selves to the holy law of God, being holy as God is holy, and exercising ourselves to keep consciences void of offence both towards God and towards man.

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THE MORAL LAW SUMMARILY COMPREHENDED IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

MATTH. xix. 17.—*If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments.*

**T**HIS is Christ's answer to a self-justiciary, who expected life by the works of the law. Christ, to convince him of his folly, sends him to the law, saying, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*

There are only two things which I take notice of here for our purpose. 1. That by *the commandments* are understood the ten commandments, ver. 18. where several of them are specified. 2. That under these commandments he comprehends the whole moral law; for this resolution of the young man's question is founded on that, Gal. iii. 12, 'The man that doth them shall live in them;' compared with ver. 10. 'For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse.' The man had deceived himself in taking the commandments only according to the letter, and therefore thought he had kept them; but Christ finds him out new work in these commandments, which he had not thought of.

The doctrine I observe from the text is,

DOCT. 'The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.'

In discoursing from this subject, I shall shew,

I. How the commandments were given.

II. Why the law was thus given and renewed.

III. How the moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commands.

IV. Apply.

I. I shall shew how the moral law, or ten commandments, were given. There are ten commandments, not more nor fewer, as appears from Deut. x. 4. where they are expressly

called *ten*. And therefore the papists, who in some sort leave out the second, split the tenth into two, to make up the number. They were given to the Israelites after they came out of their Egyptian bondage; for they that cast off Satan's yoke, must take on the Lord's. They were given two ways.

1. By an audible voice from the Lord on mount Sinai, accompanied with great terror. Never was law given in such a solemn manner, with such dread and awful majesty, *Exod. xix. Deut. iv. 5. Heb. xii. 18.* The people were commanded to wash their clothes before the law was delivered to them. By this, as in a type, the Lord required the sanctifying of their ears and hearts to receive it. There were bounds and limits set to the mount, that it might breed in the people dread and reverence to the law, and to God the holy and righteous Lawgiver. There were great thunders and lightnings. The artillery of heaven was shot off at that solemnity, and therefore it is called 'a fiery law.' The angels attended at the delivery of this law. The heavenly militia, to speak so, were all mustered out on this important occasion. In a word, the law was promulgated with the marks of supreme majesty; God by all this shewing how vain a thing it is for sinners to expect life by the works of the law; and thereby also shewing the necessity of a Mediator.

2. The ten commandments were written on two tables of stone, and that by the finger of God himself. This writing them on stone might hold out the perpetuity of that law, and withal the hardness of men's hearts. There were two tables that were given to Moses, written immediately by God himself, *Exod. xxxi. ult.* Those Moses brake, *chap. xxxii. 16. 19;* plainly holding out the entertainment they would get amongst men. Then other two tables were hewn by Moses, yet written by the finger of God, *chap. xxxiv. 1;* for by the law is the sinner hewed, but by the spirit of gospel-grace is the law written on the heart. These two tables were afterwards laid up in the ark of the covenant, in order to be fulfilled by Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. This writing of the law upon tables of stone is justly supposed to have been the first writing in the world; and therefore this noble and useful invention was of divine origin, and the foundation of

all Moses's after writings, which have been so useful to the church in all ages.

II. I shall shew, why the law was thus given and renewed.

1. For the confirmation of the natural law. For though there was no need of such a confirmation of the law while man stood, yet such was the darkness of the mind, the rebellion of the will, and disorder of the affections and other faculties, that there remained only some relics of it, which that they might not also be lost, the ten commandments were given.

2. That the same might be corrected in those things wherein it was corrupted by the fall, or defective. And indeed there was great need of it in this respect. For the law of nature in man's corrupt state is very defective. For,

(1.) It cannot carry a man to the first cause of all his misery, even Adam's first sin, and discover the evils of lust and concupiscence that lurk in his heart. Mere natural light can never teach a man to feel the weight and curse of a sin committed some thousands of years before he was born, or to mourn for that filthiness which he contracted in his conception, and for those sproutings of sin in his nature. The apostle tells us, that this cannot be learned without the law, Rom. vii. 7. 'I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.'

(2.) The law of nature is defective, because natural Judgement is thoroughly distorted and infatuated, so that it is ready to reckon evil good, and good evil, light darkness and darkness light. Nature is ready to dictate into men, that they are, 'rich and increased with goods, and stand in need of nothing; while in the mean time they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'

(3.) It was defective, because it doth not drive men out of themselves for a remedy. The sublimest philosophy that ever was did never teach a man to deny himself, but always taught him to build up his house with the old ruins, and to fetch stores and materials out of the wonted quarry. Shame, humiliation, confusion of face, self-abhorrence, condemning of ourselves, and flying to the righteousness of another, are virtues known only in the book of God, and which the learned



philosophers would have esteemed both irrational and pusillanimous things.

4. It was defective, because by nature in particular men never knew nor had experience of a better state, and therefore must needs be ignorant of that full image of God in which it was created. As a man born and brought up in a dungeon is unable to conceive the state of a palace; or as the child of a nobleman stolen away, and brought up by some beggar, cannot conceive or suspect the honours of his blood; so corrupted nature is utterly unable, that has been born in a womb of ignorance, bred in a hell of uncleanness, and enthralled from the beginning to the prince of darkness, to conceive, or convince a man of, that most holy and pure condition in which he was created.

3. To supply what was wanting in it, being obliterated by sin. In the ages before Moses, the Lord's extraordinary appearances and revelations were more frequent, and the lives of men were much longer, than they were afterwards. In Moses's time they were reduced to seventy, or little more. These aged patriarchs transmitted the knowledge of the law and men's duty to their descendents; and by this means it was handed down from father to son; but by degrees men's lives were shortened, and following generations were involved in ignorance of God and his law. Therefore, to supply this defect, and to prevent the knowledge of it from utterly perishing, was the law promulgated at Sinai.

4. To evince and convince of the necessity of a Mediator, the people that saw not this defect. When the law was thus given anew, and men saw their utter incapacity to fulfil it, by giving that due obedience it required, they would come, through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, to see the necessity of a Mediator for satisfying the law, both as to its command and penalty.

III. I shall shew how the law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments. To be summarily comprehended in a thing, is to be summed up in it, to be abridged and compendised as it were. The commandment is exceeding broad, and runs through the whole Bible; but we have a summary or short view of it in the ten commands given by the Lord on Mount Sinai. The ten commandments are the heads of all the duties of the law largely contained in the

whole Bible. They are the text which Christ himself, the prophets, and apostles expounded. They comprehend the whole duty of man, Eccl. xii. 13. There is nothing that God requires but may be reduced to one of these commandments. So faith is a duty of the first command, as it obliges men to believe whatever God reveals. The first commandment concerns the object of worship, requiring us to know and acknowledge God to be the true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him as such, in heart and life. The second relates to the means of worship, requiring us to receive, observe, and keep pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word. The third respects the holy and reverend use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works. The fourth requires us to sanctify the Sabbath, that day which he hath set apart for his own worship and service. The fifth relates to the duties we owe to one another in our several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals. The sixth requires the preservation of our own life and that of others. The seventh respects the preservation of our own and our neighbour's chastity, in heart, speech, and behaviour. The eighth relates to the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others. The ninth requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, especially in witness-bearing. And the tenth requires us to be contented with our own condition, and to have a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour and all that is his. And every commandment forbids whatever is opposite to or inconsistent with what it requires.

As to the rules necessary to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments, the following things are to be noticed.

1. They respect not only the outward actions, but the inward motions of the heart. The law is spiritual, and so reaches the inward as well as the outward man. It reaches the understanding, will, and affections, and all the other powers and faculties of the soul, as well as our words, works, and gestures. The law is spiritual, Rom. vii. 14. reaching the heart as well as the life; and therefore we ought to study conformity to it in both. The lawgiver is a spirit, and beholds all the motions and inclinations of the soul, as well

as the actions of the body; and is grieved and offended with the impurities of the heart, as well as with the enormities of the life; and therefore he requires an internal obedience, as well as an outward conformity to his will. The law extends to the imagination, that most roving and unstable faculty in man, and to dreams that are bred there.

But some may say, What is to be thought of men's dreaming that they are breaking God's commandments, e. g. profaning the Sabbath-day, swearing, lying, &c. while really they are fast asleep, are not doing so, nor opening their mouths, &c.?

*Ans.* No doubt it is sin, and will damn thee if it be not pardoned, and washed away by the blood of Christ. For, (1.) The scripture condemns it. Hence the apostle, Jude 8. speaks of 'filthy dreams that defile the flesh.' (2.) The consent of the heart unto sin, the delectation that it finds in it, makes a man guilty; and the soul is always a rational agent, and this consent is given to these temptations in sleep. (3.) A man when awake thinking what he doth is sinful, though upon the matter it be not, yet it is sin to him; e. g. a man taking his own goods, which yet he thinks are another man's, is guilty of theft before God: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. So is it in this case. (4.) As these things arise from corrupt nature, so readily they follow on some such motions that people have been taken up with when awake, or from a loose, carnal, and secure frame. They are looked on as sinful by tender consciences. (5.) As men may do something pleasing to God in a dream, so may they do something to displease him, 2 Kings iii. 5. (6.) The law impressed upon the heart is designed to keep it even in sleep, Prov. vi. 22, 23. 'When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light.' But ye may say, What if a man has been watching against these things, praying against them, &c. and yet in sleep falls into them? I answer, It is still sinful, in so far as the heart complies with the diabolical suggestion; and the truth is, by grace temptation is sometimes resisted in sleep, as well as when we are awake.

2. The commandments require perfection. No partial obedience can be admitted or sustained. The least defect is fatal, and exposes to the curse. This ought to be most seriously considered, that we may see our need of Christ's



blood and righteousness, to cover and atone for our obedience, and all its defects.

3. Whatever sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded; and where any duty is commanded, the contrary vice is forbidden. For instance, when God forbids us to have any other gods before him, he at the same time commands us to worship and adore him, the only living and true God. When he forbids the profanation of his name, he requires that esteem and reverence should be given to it.—When he forbids to steal, he commands the preservation of our neighbour's goods, by all the means that are lawful and proper for us to use. When he forbids us to kill, he commands love to our neighbour, and the preservation of his life by all lawful means. On the other hand, when God requires us to remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy, he forbids the forgetting and profanation of it. When he commands us to honour our parents, he forbids us to be undutiful or injurious to them. And indeed the nature of the thing itself requires this: for the duties enjoined by the law cannot be performed without shunning the vices which it forbids; and the sins forbidden by the law cannot be avoided, unless the contrary virtues enjoined by it are performed.—This shews the insufficiency of negative holiness; for we must not only do what the law forbids, but perform what it requires; otherwise no obedience is given to it at all.

4. Under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden and commanded: For instance, when the Lord forbids us to kill, he forbids us also to beat and wound our neighbour; and all envy, malice, and revenge, are forbidden at the same time. When he forbids to commit adultery, he forbids also incest, fornication, and all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections. When he forbids to steal, he forbids rapine, robbery, and all deceitful dealing by false weights and unjust measures. On the other hand, when the Lord commands to have no other god but himself, he commands us to love him, to reverence, worship, and adore him. When he commands us to remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy, he commands us to make conscience of the duties of his worship and service. When he commands us to love our neighbour, he commands us to do all the good offices unto him which are in our power to perform. And when any sin is forbidden, all means and things leading thereto are

forbidden. And so gross actions are named, not to pass over lesser ones, but to make them more abominable, while we see how God looks on them, giving them such gross names.

5. The prohibition of the effect includes also the prohibition of the cause, from which the effect flows. For instance, when the Lord forbids the profanation of the Sabbath, he forbids also all those works by which the Sabbath may be profaned. When he forbids uncleanness, he forbids intemperance, drunkenness, gluttony, and whatever may incite thereunto. When he forbids us to kill, he forbids anger and wrath, malice and revenge, from which bloodshed does oft-times proceed. On the other hand, when the law requires chastity, it enjoins also temperance and sobriety, and diligence in those particular callings wherein God has placed men in the world, their being means and helps thereunto, and the source as it were from whence they proceed.

6. The precepts in the second table of the law must yield to those of the first, when they cannot be both performed together. For instance our love to our neighbour must be subjected to our love to God; yea, we are commanded to hate father and mother for Christ, Luke xiv. 26. When our love to our parents and relations comes in competition with our love to Christ, and is inconsistent with it then we are not bound unto it: and when the commands of men run cross to the commands of God, then God is to be obeyed rather than men, as the apostle shew, Acts iv. 19.

7. Whatever God forbids in his law is at no time lawful to be done; and whatever he commands is always our duty. Therefore it is said, Deut. iv. 9. ‘Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life.’ Yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times: for there are many duties enjoined us which suppose certain conditions; and if these be wanting, there is no place for the performance of the duties. For instance, we are commanded to honour our parents; but this supposeth they are alive or present with us, or else there can be no place for that duty. But whatever vices are forbidden in God’s law, they are at no time lawful to be done. The negative precepts bind us always, and at all times.

We are continually to shun and avoid every thing that is evil.

8. Whatever is forbidden or commanded with respect to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places and stations, to endeavour that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places. Hence it is said, *Exod. xx. 10.* ‘The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, &c.

I shall conclude with a few practical inferences from this subject.

*Inf. 1.* This doctrine lets us see that the rule of man’s obedience is not wrapt up in darkness and shades, is not ambiguous, or hard to be understood. The rule is not far-fetched, and to be found out by hard study and laborious inquiry. No; it is plain and obvious to the common sense and reason of mankind. It is contained in ten plain words, and explained and illustrated in every book of the Bible. Nay, it is in some measure written on the hearts of all men; every son and daughter of Adam has some remains of it written on their hearts, which all the boisterous and dashing waves of corruption have never been able to efface. We may say of it, as the apostle does of the gospel, The rule of thy obedience, O man, ‘is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth.’ So that it is in vain to pretend ignorance of this rule. All pretences of ignorance in this matter are mere affectation, and most unaccountable.

2. What matter of regret is it, that in a land of light, where the Bible is, which contains in it this rule of obedience, and enforces it with the strongest motives, people should be so ignorant of what is so much their interest and advantage to know! They are wofully ignorant of both the law of God, and the spirituality and extent thereof; and pay no manner of respect to it in their heart or practice.

3. The law is perfect, and requires a full conformity thereto. It requires the utmost perfection in every duty, and forbids the least degree of every sin. So that life and salvation are absolutely unattainable by it, in regard no man can perform such an obedience to it as it requires. Our salvation is suspended in obedience to the law; which since we cannot perform, let us be induced to betake ourselves to



the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, by which the law is magnified and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased ; and will be pleased with every sinner that takes the benefit thereof.

4. The commandment is exceeding broad, reaching to every motion, desire, and affection of the heart, as well as to every action we perform. It is a rule both for our hearts and our lives. Let us then study to know this holy law of God in its spirituality and extent, and yield that obedience to it which it requires ; sincere, flowing from right principles in the heart, and directed to right ends ; universal, in respect of parts, without mincing ; cheerful, in regard of the manner ; and constant and perpetual, as to the duration. And the Lord give us understanding in all things, to know and do our duty, to the glory of his name.

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LOVE TO GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOUR, THE SUM OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

MATTH. xxii. 37, 38, 39.—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

MARK xii. 30.—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,—with all thy strength.*

THIS is an answer made by our Lord to a captious question put to him by a learned scribe. If Christ had pitched on any particular command of the ten, the lawyer, for so the querist is called, would certainly have excepted in some other, and accused him of vilifying some other commands ; but Christ gives the summary of both tables of the law, yea, of the whole scriptures touching a holy life : *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c.* In which words may be noticed,

1. The sum of the first table of the law that is, *love to the Lord*, and that such love is as superior and transcendent ; such love as gives the whole man to the Lord, with all the strength of all the powers of soul and body.

2. The sum of the second table ; that is, *love to our neighbour*, and that such love as we bear to ourselves, (but not as to God), sincere and constant.

3. Christ compares the two together, shewing that love to God is the command first to be looked unto, and by which the other is to be regulated, whether as to the loving ourselves or our neighbour. *The second is like unto it*, as having the same authority, and must be joined with the first, and is the fountain of acceptable obedience to the second-table commands, as the first is the true spring of acceptable obedience to the first-table duties.

4. He shews the whole law and the doctrine of the prophets, touching holiness, to depend on these as the sum of all.

The doctrine arising from the words is,

DOCT. 'The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind ; and our neighbour as ourselves.'

The sum of all the commands (ye see) is love. So the ten commandments are the law of love ; they are a law that is chiefly conversant about the heart, which is the seat of love. The scope of them is to unite men to God and to one another ; for there is no such cement of hearts as holiness.

The text and doctrine consists of two parts.

- I. The sum of the first table of the law is love to God.
- II. The sum of the second is love to our neighbour.

I. The sum of the first table of the law is love to God.

Here I shall shew,

1. The ingredients of this love to God, whereof it is made up.

2. The properties of it.

3. Why this love is due to God.

4. How love to the Lord stands in relation to other commands.

5. *Lastly*, Apply.

First, I shall shew the ingredients of this love to God, whereof it is made up.

1. Knowledge of him. An unseen but not an unknown God can be loved with all the heart, soul, strength, and mind. Ignorant souls cannot love God; what the eye sees not, the heart likes not. Hell fire may have heat without light: but all heavenly fire has light as well as heat. Thou must know God, (1.) Who he is, to wit, the Lord Jehovah, the one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. These are the object of divine love. (2.) What he is in his attributes, as an infinite, eternal and unchangeable Being: Comprehend him ye cannot, but apprehend him ye must, as he has revealed himself. And so when love is shed abroad in the heart, the veil is first taken from the eyes.

2. Chusing of him for our God, our chief good and portion, Psal. lxxiii. 25. ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.’ *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart.* If we love him not above all, we do not truly love him; if we chuse him not for our portion, we love him not above all. The soul that loves the Lord, sees that in him which may satisfy it, nothing out of him that is necessary to make the soul happy. Hence it does, by choice, take up its everlasting rest in him, and finds a match to itself in him.

3. Cleaving to him as our God: *Love the Lord thy God.* Love is an uniting thing; it makes the soul cleave to the object. Thou must cleave to the Lord, to his ways, word, &c. Not to be separated from him by whatsoever wedge the devil or the world may drive. Not to be bribed from him, nor boasted either, Cant viii. 7. ‘Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.’ And cleave to him as thy God; for so he will be loved. He must be thy God, before thou canst love him aright. Thus was it with Adam, and Christ; and thus it is with believers.

Hence it is evident, (1.) That faith is the first spring of all true obedience. There is no obedience but from love, no love but from faith, whereby God becomes our God.—How can it otherwise be? for although God is in himself the chief good, if he be not ours, the more perfect Being he is, the more terrible an enemy he is.

(2.) That the way prescribed by God himself for us to attain love to him, is to apprehend him by faith to be our



God; which now can be no otherwise but by faith in Christ. So that to love God, that he may love us, is a preposterous method. But let us labour to embrace Christ, and so to believe God loves us in him; then shall the heart natively flow out in love to him, 1 John iv. 19; 'We love him, because he first loved us.'

4. High thoughts and a transcendent esteem of him, Cant. v. 10. 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.' He is the best of beings, the most amiable and lovely, that shines with unparalleled perfections; and therefore is to have the supreme place in our estimation as well as affections. Here our esteem cannot go too high, more than we can reach beyond what is infinite. We cannot launch out too far in admiration of his glory. Thus should we highly and honourably think of him as the best and greatest. It is a sad character of the wicked man, Psal. x. 4. that 'God is not in all his thoughts.'

5. Desire towards him, Psal. lxxiii. 25. Whatever other desires we have, the main stream of our desires must run towards the Lord, Psal. xxvii. 4. to the enjoyment of him in this life, and the perfect enjoyment of him hereafter; so that God not being perfectly enjoyed here, it is natural to the lovers of God to desire to 'be with Christ,' Phil. i. 23. 2 Thess. iii. 5.

6. *Lastly*, Complacency in him, Cant. i. 13. The soul must delight in him, have a pleasure in him. The lover of the Lord is well pleased there is such a being, well pleased with all his attributes, all his relations to us, all his words, ways, and works. And the want of this makes men haters of God in the scripture-sense.

*Secondly*, I shall shew the properties of this love required of us. It is,

1. Sincere, not in word and tongue only, shewing much love, Prov. xxiii. 26. but inwardly, our hearts being with him, to him, and for him.

2. Most strong and vigorous, even as much as we are capable of, all the strength we are masters of. Love may be sincere, though not most intense, and that the gospel may accept: but the law requires a perfection of degrees as well of parts. The greatest fervour of affection is due to God, and the greatest ardency of love, beyond which we cannot go.

3. Pure and absolute for himself. Not that we are not to

love God as our benefactor, Psal. cxvi. 11. but we must love him also and mainly for those excellencies that are in him, Cant. i. 3. for his truth, justice, mercy, holiness, &c.

4. A superlative and transcendent love. We must love God above all creatures whatsoever, ourselves or others, Luke xiv. 26. And so must all other loves be swallowed up in his, we must love nothing beside him, but for him, and in due subordination to him.

5. An intelligent love, Mark xii. 33. We must love him as those that see good cause to love him. There is no blindness in this love; for there are no faults in the object to be hid; but the better we see, the more we love.

6. *Lastly*, An efficacious working love, 1 John iii. 18. Therefore says the apostle, Rom. xiii. 10. 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore 'love is the fulfilling of the law.' Love devotes the whole man to God, to serve his glory in the world, Rom. xiv. 7, 8. and makes him ready to forego what is dearest to him in the world for God, Acts xx. 24. and sets a man on doing and suffering at his call.

*Thirdly*, I will shew why this love is due to God. It is due because of his transcendent excellency, and absolute loveliness. There is nothing in him but what is good; all goodness is in him, and nothing wanting; and each part of goodness is in him infinitely. No love, then, is suitable to him but such a love. There is nothing lovely in the creatures, but what is eminently in him, Matth. xix. 17; but there is something wanting in all the creatures, that must stint our love.

*Fourthly*, I shall shew how love to the Lord stands in relation to other commands.

1. It is the chief duty. It is what God mainly requires, and what we ought mainly to aim at. It is the end, to which even faith itself is but the mean, and in that respect is by the apostle preferred to all others, 1 Cor. xiii.

2. It is the comprehensive duty of all, Rom. xiii. 10. As is our love, so will our obedience be. Were our love perfect, our obedience would be so too. It is the fruitful womb out of which proceed all other duties.

3. It is an universal duty; it goes through all. Whatever acceptable service we do, must be done in love; and if it be not done so, it is not accepted. Other duties are the meat, but this is the salt to season all.

*Fifthly*, I shall deduce some inferences from what has been said.

*Inf.* 1. What a sweet law is the law of God, that law of love ! how rational ! how drawing ! Did ever prince make a law for his subjects to love him ? But God has made such a law ; and all his loyal subjects cheerfully obey it, and find their advantage in it.

2. See the excellency of the love of God. The whole law is comprised in love. Would ye have the most short way to obedience ? then love the Lord. Take a hold of this master-link, and ye will draw the whole chain after you. He that loveth God, will keep his commandments ; for love is the fulfilling of the law.

3. How little obedience or true holiness is there in the world ? for how little love to God is there ? Alas for the cold hearts that make benumbed hands and feet ! Did men love God as he deserves and requires to be loved, could they break his commandments, and live in such carelessness and unconcern about God and his laws, and the important concerns of their souls, as the generality do ? Alas ! the coldness of professors in the cause of God, is a melancholy evidence that love to him is at a low ebb amongst us.

4. What an absurd thing is the device of supererogating, and doing more than the law requires ? We are required to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind ? Is it possible to go further than that ? Nay, can any man attain to such a perfect love ? No person that truly loves God can possibly think he exceeds the pitch of loving him required in the law. On the contrary, it is matter of grief to him that he cannot love him enough. Any measure he has attained proves unsatisfying. He will still desire and labour to have his love more increased, and rendered more lively and intense. So far will he be from imagining he loves God more than it is his duty to do.

5. There is no true religion where there is no heart-religion : and there is no respect to the law, where there is no love. It is in vain for men to pretend to be religious, while they have no principle of love to God implanted and operating in their hearts. External obedience is of no avail without internal, founded upon and proceeding from love to God as its source. All true obedience is the fruit of love to God ; and where love prevails in the heart, there will be a sincere



respect to all God's commandments, to his word, his ordinances, and institutions.

6. Let us all be induced to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind: esteeming and preferring him above all other things, acquisitions, possessions, and enjoyments; giving him the chief room in our hearts, delighting and resting in him as our chief good and upmaking portion; desiring to be more and more acquainted with him, and ardently longing to have copious manifestatious of his love and grace made to ourselves; and in a sincere respect to all his laws, statutes, and precepts. And let us be ready to part with all we have, all our enjoyments and possessions, however valuable and dear they may be to us, at the Lord's call and command, whenever we can keep them no longer in a consistency with our love to God and his cause. We must forsake all to follow Christ; and lay down our life, rather than not love the Lord our God.

I now proceed to consider the second part of the text and doctrine, viz.

II. The sum of the second table of the law is love to our neighbour.

In discoursing from this point, I shall shew,

1. Who is our neighbour.
2. What is that love we owe to our neighbour.
3. How we are to love our neighbour.
4. *Lastly*, Apply the point.

*First*, I am to shew who is our neighbour. Every man is our neighbour, known or unknown, friend or foe, good or bad, Luke x. 29, 37. This neighbourhood is founded on two things especially. 1. That common relation that is among all as branches of one stock, having one common nature, Acts xvii. 26. 2. The common capacity of all to enjoy the same God, and to meet in him; all men being capable of that happiness, because of their immortal souls capable of enjoying an infinite good. Hence see,

1. How the hatred of evil men and love to them may be reconciled, Psalm cxxxix. 21. 'Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? Compare the text, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. We have the common grounds aforementioned whereon to love all men; but forasmuch as sin is a

depravation of that common nature, and the only thing that mars men's enjoyments of God, we hate their sins, though we love their persons; as we hate the moth, because we love the garment. Hatred to men's persons, whoever or whatever they be, is inconsistent with this command that enjoins the love of our neighbour as well as the love of God. But to hate and abhor their sins and evil deeds, is quite consistent with love to their persons. And agreeably to this, David's hatred to those who hated God, ultimately terminated on their sins, and not their persons.

2. We see here a ground whereon we ought to love our enemies. Their common nature with us, and their common capacity of happiness with us in the enjoyment of God, remains, though they do evil to us; and therefore we are bid pray for them, Matth. v. 44. 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you\*.'

*Secondly*, I shall shew what is that love we owe to our neighbour. In it there is,

1. A due esteem of him, 1 Pet. ii. 17. 'Love the brotherhood.' There are no persons but who have something for which they are to be esteemed. Some have grace, all have gifts, natural or moral, in greater or lesser measure, which are from God, James i. 17. None want precious souls, that are of more worth and value than the world. And the pearl must be esteemed precious, though in a dunghill.

2. Benevolence or good-will to them, Luke vi. 31. 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.' We are heartily to desire their welfare for time and for eternity, to wish them the best things. This good affection we are to bear to all. And this brings in with it a sorrow for the evil that befalls them, and joy in their good and prosperity.

3. Beneficence, doing them what good we can, doing to them as we would be done to, Matth. vii. 12. Gal. vi. 10. We are not born for ourselves, but for God and our neighbour; and therefore we should lay out ourselves to be useful in the world and to advance the good of mankind, so far as we are capable.

\* This subject of loving our enemies may be seen well handled in a collection of this author's sermons, formerly published, entitled, *The distinguishing characters of true believers*, p. 248, 274.

4. Complacency or delight in them, so far as any good thing appears in them, 1 Pet. ii. 17. 'Honour all men.' This doth in a special manner belong to the saints, those excellent ones, in whom should be all our delight, Psal. xvi. 3. Yet a delight in the good gifts of God in any man, and their amiable qualities and dispositions, is our duty.

*Thirdly*, I shall shew, how we are to love our neighbour: *As yourselves*, says the text. Here two things are to be noticed.

1. That there is an allowable self-love, a love that we may and ought to bear to ourselves; for that is the rule of love to our neighbour. We are to love our own bodies, by all lawful means to see to their welfare. For, says the apostle, Eph. v. 29. 'No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it.' And we are to love our own souls, by all means to endeavour their salvation, and to beware of all that may obstruct it. For, says wisdom, Prov. viii. 36. 'He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul.' We are to love ourselves in God, and for God; for he and not man's self, is his chief end. This becomes sinful self-love, when it does not remain in due subordination to the love of God, or destroys love to our neighbour.

2. In what sense we are to love our neighbour as ourselves? This hath a respect both to the matter and to the manner. As to the matter, this likeness lies chiefly in three things.

(1.) That we neither wish evil, nor do evil to our neighbour, more than to ourselves. (2.) That we wish all good to our neighbour as to ourselves, and be ready to do all we can to procure and further it. (3.) That we desire these things to our neighbour, out of a true respect to him, and his advantage, not our own.

As to the manner, (1.) We must love our neighbour as truly and really as we love ourselves. No man feigns a love to himself: so must our love to others be unfeigned, not like the devouring lips, and the wicked heart.

(2.) Earnestly, as we love ourselves, without coldness and remissness, Matt. xxiv. 12. This is a fire that should never slacken, but burn intensely.

(3.) Constantly, without changing. Though they be not so favourable to us at all times, yet we are still to love them as ourselves. Our love to them must not be suspended on their love to us, and the effects of it: but it must glow to them, even though we meet with ungrateful returns.



*Fourthly*, I shall now draw some inferences from this point, the loving of our neighbour as ourselves.

*Inf.* 1. Great need have we to have our self-love rectified. For, as when the rule is wrong, nothing can be right that is regulated by it; so, when our love to ourselves is wrong, we cannot rightly love our neighbour. This is the love of companions in sin, who involve themselves and one another in one common ruin.

2. All the commands of the second table have respect to ourselves in the first place as our nearest neighbour. Thus, 'Thou shalt not kill;' that is, thou shalt not kill thyself nor thy neighbour. So the duties of religion are reduced to these three, to 'live soberly, righteously, and godly,' Tit. ii. 12.

3. Hatred of our neighbour is an universal sin against the commands of the second table; as love to our neighbour is the chief, comprehensive, and universal duty of the second table, so is the hatred of our neighbour, the chief, comprehensive, and universal sin against that table.

4. Several persons are reproveable here.

(1.) Those that in effect do not love themselves, but go on in sinful courses, ruining to their bodies, and ruining to their souls; who treat themselves as the worst of enemies. Men must answer to God for this; for their souls and their bodies are not their own, but the Lord's.

(2.) Those that love themselves only, and not their neighbours; who value not how it be with others, if it go well with themselves; and can comfortably build up themselves on the ruin of others. All seek their own things. This is a most base and selfish disposition, destructive of society, and very offensive to God.

(3.) Those that love some of their neighbours, but not all. One will say, Such an one is my enemy; be it so; but yet love to him is law; and his enmity against you cannot dissolve the obligation of the law of God to love him. Love him that he may be thy friend; love him, but not his faults. The more need he has of thy love, that he may be reclaimed; as we run to the physician for love to the man, not to his disease. The loving and shewing love to one that is our enemy, is the fairest and readiest way to reclaim and gain him. If any thing will do it, this is the most sensible means.

(4.) Those that love in word, but hate in heart; that love

like Joab and Judas : they will speak fair to a man's face, but would cut his throat behind his back. Such a practice is abominable hypocrisy, odious to God, and nauseous to every honest man.

(5.) Those that pretend to love their neighbour, but their love is fruitless ; their neighbour is never the better of it. They say they love such a one ; but they never give him good counsel, though he stands in need of it ; they do him no service, though it be in their power, and his circumstances require it. Such love is all pretence, without substance or reality.

6. *Lastly*, They that do not love the Lord's people, who are their best neighbours, the substance and strength of a church and nation, who are, as Elijah was, ' the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.' Love is a duty to them above all men, for what they are in themselves, lovers of God and all good men, and for the relation they stand in to God, as his people, his redeemed, and sanctified ones, who when the time of their warfare here is accomplished, shall be translated to the kingdom of glory, to the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Not to love them is a great sin, inconsistent with the law and love of God ; and to hate them, especially on account of their goodness, is direct rebellion against God, an insult to the Majesty of heaven, whose subjects and servants they are.

5. Let us study to love our neighbour, and to bury all strifes, animosities, hatred, and malice. For motives, consider,

1. That little neighbour-love, is a sad sign of little love to God, 1 John iv. 20. ' If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar ; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?'

(2.) Consider the bond of one common nature, which should cement and knit together all of the same species.—Lions and Wolves do not prey on their own kind, but shew kindness to one another. As men are of one common nature derived from Adam, should they not love and shew kindness to one another ? for they are strictly brethren, and are as strictly bound to love one another as such.

(3.) Consider the love of God and Christ to men. It was most free, unmerited, unsought, and unsolicited. They

loved not friends, but enemies and rebels, who had taken up arms against their Creator and Sovereign Lord. Men had by their sin involved themselves in utter ruin, and could not help themselves. In such deplorable circumstances did God fix his love on them, and send his Son to redeem them from the curse of the law, and from the wrath to come, by laying down his life for them. And shall not such a glorious and unspeakable instance of the love of the great God, and his Son Jesus Christ, to the ruined race of fallen man, excite and stir us up to love our neighbour, and to do him all the service we can, both as to his temporal and eternal interests?

*Lastly*, How happy would the world be if men loved others as themselves! Suppose ten men; so love would contract ten into one, and multiply one into ten. How happy would each of these ten be, who would have ten hearts to care for him, twenty eyes to see for him, twenty hands to work for him, and twenty feet to travel for him!

Let the Lord's people especially love one another. They are the Sons of God, and the brethren of Christ. God loved them with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he drew them to himself. Christ redeemed them at no less price than that of his most precious blood. The Holy Spirit is their Sanctifier and Comforter, and will abide with them for ever. They are members of one family, fellow-citizens, and of the household of faith. They are members of one body, of which Christ is the head. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one hope of their calling. They have all fled from one city, that of sin and destruction; and they are travelling unto one heavenly country. They are all clothed with one garment, the complete righteousness of their Surety and High Priest. They are all the spouse of Christ, who is one. They are all brethren, children of the promise. Shall then such persons fall out by the way? Nay, shall they not dearly love one another? 'Be kindly affectionate one to another, (says the apostle), with brotherly love,' Rom. xii. 10. 'Let brotherly love continue,' Heb. xiii. 1. Such love is a sure and infallible sign of your being the friends and followers of Christ. 'By this (says our Lord), shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' Be at peace then among yourselves, and shew that ye are subjects of the Prince of peace, and heirs of the legacy of peace which he has left you.



THE PREFACE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

EXOD. XX. 2.—*I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

SOME take these words, which are the first of that speech spoken immediately by God himself, to be a part of the first commandment, shewing who is the true God, that is to be our God. Our Catechism determines them to be a preface to all the commandments; and though they have a particular relation to the first command, ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me,’ viz. *The Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*; yet, seeing the first commandment has a common relation to all of them, and is interwoven with all the rest, and the words natively enforce obedience to the whole, they are set here as a preface to all the commands, like a magnificent entry into a palace, decorated with the arms of the owner. In the words consider,

1. The Speaker and Giver of these commandments. It is *the Lord*, particularly Jesus Christ, who gave this law in name of the Trinity. This is plain from the scripture. Acts vii. 38. Heb. xii. 24.—26. It was he that brought the people out of Egypt, and that appeared in the bush that burned with fire, and yet was not consumed, giving commission to Moses for their deliverance, Exod. iii. 2.—8.

2. The speech itself, wherein we have a description of the true God, bearing three reasons for the keeping his commands. (1.) From his sovereignty; he is *the Lord*. (2.) From his covenant-relation to his people, *thy God*. (3.) From the great benefit of redemption, and deliverance wrought for them,

DOCT. ‘The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, That because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.’

But it may be asked, Why does the Lord make use of ar-

guments to induce us to obedience? *Ans.* Because he loves to work on man, as a rational creature, according to the principles of his nature. Hence he says, Hos. xi. 4, 'I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love;' and because he delights in no obedience but what is unconstrained and cheerful. It is truly matter of wonder, that the infinitely glorious God should be at so great pains to incline man to pursue his own happiness.

Here I shall consider the several reasons of obedience mentioned in the text and doctrine, and then draw some inferences for application.

*First,* As to the first reason for obedience to these commandments, it is in these words, *I am the Lord*, or JEHOVAH; that is, an eternal, unchangeable one, having his being of himself, and from whom all being is derived; Exod. iii. 14. **I AM THAT I AM.** This is a very significant name, and denotes, (1.) The unity of the Godhead, that he is one true God, having no partner, equal, or rival. (2.) The reality and certainty of his being. Idols are nothing; all their divinity is only in the fancies and opinions of men: but God is a real and true being. (3.) The necessity, eternity, and unchangeableness of his being. All other things which have a being were once without being; they had no existence till he gave it them: and if he please, they shall be no more, but be reduced into their primitive nothing; and all their being was derived from, and wholly depends upon him. But he was from all eternity an independent and self-existent being. (4.) The constancy and perpetuity of his nature and will; *I am that I am*; i. e. I am the same that ever I was, and will be the same, without all mutability in my nature, will, and purposes. This name includes these four reasons for our obeying his commandments.

1. The infinite excellency and perfection of his nature, whereby he is the natural Lord of all his creatures, Jer. x. 7. He is infinitely above us, and so glorious in his supereminent perfections, that the view of them must natively cause us poor worms to fall down at his feet, and receive his commands; and makes our rebellions monstrous, more than if a glow-worm should contend with the sun in its meridian brightness.

2. He is Lord Creator to us, that gave us our being, and we are the workmanship of his hands, and are therefore to

be at his disposal, as the pots are at that of the potter, Psal. c. 2, 3. Whatever we have, tongue, hands, soul, body, &c. all is from him; how can we then decline his government?

3. He is Lord Rector, supreme Governor and Lawgiver to us, whose will is our law, James iv. 12. 'There is one Lawgiver.' This he is as Jehovah, the fountain of all being, which gives him an absolute and unlimited dominion over us. So that disobedience to his commands is the highest injustice we are capable of.

4. He is Lord Conservator of us, the Preserver of men, Rev. iv. 11. Every moment we have a continued creation from him, without which we could no more subsist than the beams of the sun without the sun itself, but would immediately dwindle into nothing. Being then thus upheld wholly in our being by him, should we not wholly be for him?

*Secondly*, The second reason is from his covenant-relation to us, *thy God*, The word denotes a plurality; and so shews, that one God in three persons to be the true God, and that all the three are the covenanted God of his people, Isa. liv. 5. 'Thy Makers is thine husband;' for the word is plural in the Hebrew. Here I shall shew,

1. What this covenant is.

2. How this covenant bindeth to the obedience of the commandments.

1. What covenant is this? It is the covenant whereby he was Israel's God before the giving of the law on Sinai; for this plainly relates to a former relation betwixt them, by virtue of which they were brought out of Egypt. This was then no other but the covenant with Abraham and his seed, Gen. xvii. 7. and xv. 18. and by virtue of the covenant-promise to Abraham, it was, that they were delivered out of Egypt, Gen. xv. 13, 14. &c. That was not the covenant of works, for it is still opposed to the law, Rom. iv. therefore it is the covenant of grace.

Under this covenant with Abraham all Israel according to the flesh were in an external manner, whereby God had a more special right over them than the rest of the world; and so is it with all who are within the visible church at this day. But Israel according to the Spirit, the elect of God, and believers, the spiritual seed of Abraham, were and are most properly under this covenant, and that in a saving manner.



Rom. iv. 11, 12, 13. So that this reason is not general to all the world, but peculiar to the church.

2. I shall shew how this covenant bindeth to obedience to the commandments. Not as if obedience to the commands were conditions of that covenant; that is the nature of the covenant of works. For mark, God tells them he is their God before ever he proposes one commandment to them; and for God to be the God of a people in the sense of the promise made to Abraham, includes the assurance of their complete salvation, Mat. xxii. 32. But,

1. The consent to the covenant binds to the obedience of all the commands. The covenant is, 'I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people,' Heb. viii. 10. So consenting that God shall be our God, we take on us the yoke of all his commands, to be for him only, wholly, and for ever, 2 Cor. viii. 5. Isa. xlv. 5.

2. The honour of the covenant. Thereby sinners are advanced into a near relation to God. They become his servants, whose honour it is to serve him; his friends, whose honour it is to advance his interest in the world; his spouse, whose honour it is to be for him, and obey him; his members, whose honour it is to serve himself of them.

3. The privileges of the covenant, Luke i. 74, 75. Such are regeneration, whereby a new nature is given, to be a principle of new life, 2 Cor. v. 17. Justification, whereby the curse is taken off the tree, that it may be no more barren. Sanctification, whereby they die unto sin, and live unto righteousness; even as the curing of the lame and palsied man obliges him to bestir himself.

4. The great end of the covenant, which is no other but to restore fallen man to his primitive integrity, and to bring him to a state of perfect assimilation to God, Cant. iii. 9, 10. The holiness required in the ten commandments is the kingdom and the throne, from which the devil had expelled and pulled man down. This covenant is entered into for the restoring him again to that kingdom, and so binds to endeavours that way.

*Thirdly,* The last reason is drawn from the redemption and deliverances wrought for his people. The history is well known, and some of the leading circumstances of it will be mentioned anon. Here I will shew,

1. Why this deliverance is commemorated here.

2. What reason for obedience there is in it.

1. I shall shew why this deliverance is commemorated here.

(1.) To shew the faithfulness of God to his promise and covenant with Abraham, Gen. xv. 13—16. And so he shews himself to be Jehovah by ocular demonstration, Exod. vi. 3.

(2.) The strangeness of that deliverance. When the Israelites were groaning under their taskmasters in Egypt, and had no prospect of relief, the Lord raises up Moses to be a deliverer unto them. He sent him in before Pharaoh to work wonders in his sight. The Lord delivered his people with a mighty hand and outstretched arm. He sent plague after plague upon Pharaoh, till he sent Israel away, blasting the fruits of the earth, killing the beasts of the field, the fishes in the rivers, and all the first-born in the land of Egypt; and when Israel went out of Egypt, God made the waters of the sea to part, and become a wall unto them; they marched on dry ground in the midst of the sea; it was a safe passage to the Israelites, but a grave to the Egyptians, Pharaoh and his host being overthrown in the midst of the sea. Now, this was a strange and miraculous deliverance; a mercy never to be forgotten; and therefore it is commemorated here, to bind them to obedience.

(3.) Because it was a most great and memorable benefit. They were delivered from cruel tyranny. They were slaves to the Egyptians, who made them to serve with rigour. They had cruel taskmasters set over them, who put them to hard labour. All their male children were appointed to be killed, or drowned in the river Nile, their affliction and bondage was so great that they were made to sigh and groan, and their cry went up to heaven. Hence Egypt is called 'the iron furnace,' Deut. iv. 20; and here it is called *the house of bondage*. Again, they were delivered from Egypt, a place overwhelmed with pollutions and abominations. The Egyptians were gross idolaters, having 'changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things,' Rom. i. 23. They worshipped birds, and beasts, and creeping things; as the hawk, the ox, the crocodile; yea, they worshipped onions and garlic. Now considering

how prone the Jews were to idolatry, it was a great mercy to be delivered from an idolatrous land. This was a signal and memorable favour. Joshua reckons it among the chief and most memorable mercies of God to Abraham, that he brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, where his ancestors served strange Gods. And may not this deliverance from Egypt be justly reckoned among the choice mercies of God to Abraham's posterity.

(4.) It was a late and fresh instance of God's kindness to them. Which leaves an imputation of forgetfulness of old mercies on man's nature for which God stirs them up, by the newest and latest, to obedience.

(5.) Because it was a type of the spiritual deliverance by Jesus Christ from sin, satan, and hell. [1.] It was typical of the deliverance from the bondage of sin. Now, of all servitudes sin is the worst; for it enslaves the soul. Before conversion, says Augustine, I was held, not with an iron chain, but with the obstinacy of my own will. In this slavery the soul is distorted and drawn asunder as it were by the powerful cravings of contrary lusts and passions. [2.] Of their deliverance from Satan. Thus all men by nature are in the house of bondage. They are enslaved to the devil, who is called the god of this world and is said to rule in the children of disobedience. Sinners are under his command, and he exerciseth an absolute jurisdiction over them. He blinds their minds with ignorance and error; rules in their memories, making them to remember that which is evil, and forget that which is good; in their wills, drawing them to the love and practice of sin, &c. [3.] Of their deliverance from hell. All men by nature are children of wrath, and liable to condemnation in hell for ever. Now the Lord Jesus, by price and power, delivers his elect from the state of bondage to sin and Satan, Heb. ii. 15; and from the wrath that is to come, 1 Thess. i. 10. And this is done, not for all men, but only for the spiritual Israel of God, who were typified by the Israelites.

2. I shall shew what reason for obedience there is in this deliverance here commemorated. There is great reason.

(1.) Benefits received are most powerful engagements to duty, Rom. ii. 4. and the greatest benefits are the strongest engagements. And no greater benefit are men capable of than that deliverance from the spiritual bondage which the



godly Israelites had as well as the other, and which agrees to us New-Testament saints, Col. i. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

(2.) This deliverance is wrought for that end, and by that deliverance men are put in a capacity to serve the Lord, which otherwise they were not, Luke i. 74, 75. While they were in their hard bondage in Egypt, Pharaoh would not suffer them to go serve the Lord, but now they had nothing to hinder them from it. So when men are under the bondage of the covenant of works, they are withheld by the rigour thereof from serving the Lord in an acceptable manner; but when once they are delivered by Christ from that rigorous bondage, they are made free men, and can serve the Lord in righteousness and holiness before him all the days of their life, having none to hinder them.

*Fourthly*, I shall conclude this subject with a few practical inferences.

*Inf.* 1. The ten commandments were not given to the Israelites as a covenant of works, but in the way of the covenant of grace, and under that covert. Ye saw it was Jesus the Mediator that spoke these, Heb. xii. 24, 26.— Amongst all the reasons there is not one of terror; but the sweet savour of gospel-grace\*.

2. The true way to attain to the obedience of these commandments, is first to believe that God is our God in Christ, and then to set about the performance of them; first to believe, then to do. The attempting it the contrary way, placing obedience first before faith, is entirely contrary to the Lord's method. Thus to believe, strengthens the soul for obedience.

3. All true obedience to the ten commandments now must run in the channel of the covenant of grace, being directed to God as our God in that covenant, Deut. xxviii. 58. This is to fear that glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD. And so legal obedience is no obedience at all. This obedience is performed not for righteousness, but to testify our love to the Lord our Righteousness; not in our own strength, but in that of our Lord God and Redeemer; not to be accepted for its own worth, but for the sake of a Redeemer's merits; not out of fear of hell, or hope to purchase heaven, but out of love and gratitude to him who has

\* See the Author's Notes on the Marrow of Modern Divinity.

delivered us from hell, and purchased heaven and everlasting happiness for us.

4. All men are obliged to keep these commandments, for God is Lord of all : but the saints especially; for besides being their Lord, he is their God and Redeemer too. So far is the state of the saints from being a state of sinful liberty, that there are none so strongly bound to obedience as they, and that by the strongest of all bonds, those of love and gratitude, arising from the amazing and wonderful obedience and satisfaction which he has performed for them. So that the love of Christ will sweetly and powerfully constrain them to run the way of his commandments; for his commandments are not grievous, and in the keeping of them is a great reward. They will love him, because he has first loved them; and his love has flowed out to them in the crimson streams of their dear Redeemer's blood, by which their sins are expiated, and their guilt atoned. And those to whom much is forgiven, will certainly love much.

5. Holiness is the most reasonable course that men can take, and the breaking over the bonds of religion is breaking over the bonds of reason. God might have required of us obedience by his mere will, without giving any other reason; and in that case, men had been bound to give it at their peril. But how much sweeter is the command, and agreeable what he demands, when he enforces the requirement he makes by such engaging motives, as that he is the Lord, a being possessed of all possible perfection, of every glorious attribute and excellency, the author of all other beings, and all the amiable qualities and attracting excellencies of which they are possessed; that he is our God, related to us by a covenant, which he hath made with his own Son as our Surety and Saviour, and which is brought near to us in the gospel, that we may enter into the bond thereof, and the righteousness of which is brought near unto us, who are stout-hearted and far from righteousness, that we may accept thereof, and so be delivered from condemnation and wrath? How agreeable and ravishing is it to reflect, that he incites and prompts us to obedience, not by the authority of his absolute sovereignty over us, and undoubted propriety in us, but by the inviting and attracting consideration of the great deliverance he has wrought for us, of which the deliverance from the Egyptian bondage was a bright type! Can we reflect on the

great salvation wrought for us by Jesus Christ, by which we were saved from all the horrors of sin and hell, rescued from the power of Satan, and delivered from the present evil world, and the pollutions thereof; can we reflect on these great and glorious benefits, which afford astonishment to men and angels, and our hearts not glow with the warmest fire of love and gratitude to him who hath done such excellent things for us? Can we hesitate a moment to say, good is thy will, O God, just and holy are thy laws, and we will cheerfully obey what thou commandest us?

*Lastly*, The more favours any have received from the Lord, the more they owe obedience to him. Repeated favours conferred, are new calls to gratitude and cheerful obedience to the will of God. Every mercy that we receive, every favour conferred upon us by God, is a fresh call to double our diligence, and to labour with our utmost might, to do the will of our gracious Benefactor and Friend. And a continued neglect of the favours and benefits which the Lord bestows on men, will make their sins the greater, and their punishment the sorer. O! that we may lay these things to heart, and fear the glorious and fearful name of the Lord our God!



## OF THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 3.—*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

THE scope of this command is, to direct us to the right object of worship. In speaking to it, I shall follow the method of the Catechism. That is, I will shew,

I. What is required in the first commandment.

II. What is forbidden in it.

III. The import of the words, *before me*.

I. I am to shew, what is required in the first commandment.

The ground whereon this question is built, is, that every command hath an affirmative part and a negative. The negative is included in the affirmative, and the affirmative in



the negative. As in this command, the negative is expressed, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*; hence we infer the affirmative part, *Thou shalt have me for thy God*. Now, the commandment being exceeding broad, many are the duties included in this, the chief whereof are contained in the answer. ‘The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly.’

Here are the three chief duties of this command. 1. Knowing. 2. Acknowledging. 3. Worshipping and glorifying. That these are required here, is evident: for it is impossible that we can have God for our God, if we do not know him; and seeing the command requires the obedience of the whole man, it necessarily binds us to acknowledge, worship, and glorify him accordingly.

FIRST, We must know God. Hence said David, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. ‘And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father.’ Knowledge is the foundation of all religion, for religion is a reasonable service. The mind of man should be clear and distinct in the uptaking of divine things. So it was when God made it, so it should be without darkness. This commandment requires us to know,

1. The existence of God, ‘that he is,’ Heb. xi. 6. not only that there is a God, but that the God of Israel is the true God.

2. The nature of God, what he is. To know God comprehensively and adequately, is beyond the reach of the creature’s capacity. Hence said Zophar, one of Job’s friends, Job xi. 7. ‘Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?’ and such a knowledge is not required. But a true knowledge of him we must have. Hence Christ said, John xvii. 3. ‘This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God;’ that is, to know him as he has revealed himself in his word and works. We must know him in the Unity of his essence, Deut. vi. 4; and Trinity of persons, 1 John v. 7; in his attributes held out to us in the word, as that he is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, &c. in his works of creation, providence, and redemption.

And forasmuch as where the end is required, the means also leading thereto are required, so the diligent study and observation of the word and works of God, and all means

leading thereto, are hereby required of us; such as praying, hearing sermons, catechising, &c.

SECONDLY, we are required hereby to acknowledge him to be the only true God, and our God; Deut. xxvi. 17. 'Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God.' This acknowledgement presupposeth.

*First*, A believing firmly, and without the least hesitation, that God is, and what he is, as he has revealed himself in his word and works, Heb. xi. 6; for that is the end of the knowledge of God, even a full persuasion of what is given us to know concerning him. And what he reveals, it is certainly our duty firmly to believe; as that there is one God, this God a spirit; and that there are three persons in the Godhead, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

*Secondly*, A full and hearty chusing of this God for our God and portion, in opposition to all other persons and things: Psalm xvi. 2. 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord.' Psal. cxix. 57. 'Thou art my portion, O Lord.' We are not at liberty to chuse our God or our portion, what we will give our hearts to, love most, &c. God, as our great Lord and Master, has determined that for himself. And law-vengeance will pursue the neglect of it.

*Thirdly*, Hence, seeing there is no right chusing of God as our God but in his covenant, it is evident, that covenanting with God personally is a great and plain duty of this commandment, Psal. xvi. 2, forecited. Is. xlv. 5. 'One shall say, I am the Lord's;—another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord.' I have before observed, that these commands are proposed under the covert of the covenant of grace, wherein God offers himself to all to whom the gospel comes to be their God in Christ; and this command binds us to accept. And under this duty several things are required of us,

1. A serious deliberation as to the matching of our souls, Josh. xxiv. 15. 'Chuse ye this day whom ye will serve.' Think with yourselves, O sinners, young or old, who must have this heart of yours. Consider the match proposed to thee by God himself; think on the nature of the covenant, that thou mayest deliberately consent to it, Luke xiv. 28.

2. A breaking off the covenant with our lusts and idols, Matth. v. 24. God says, thou shalt have me for thy God;

therefore thou must let these go their way. As one would rise up and say to a woman giving herself in marriage to another, I have a prior right to thee, thou shalt have no other husband but me. So that, could the voice of this command be heard, it would be heard saying and crying out of injury done to thy God, whensoever any thing lawful or unlawful gets away the heart inordinately.

3. Faith in Jesus Christ, receiving him as he is offered in the gospel, and taking God for our God in him, even Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which is the accepting of the covenant, Matth. xxii. 4. For though the law knows not Christ, yet it obliges to believe whatever God shall reveal, and do whatever he commands. And 'this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ,' 1 John iii. 23. So that the law confirms this great command in the gospel.

4. Faithfulness in the covenant, continuing with him, and cleaving to him; for this is an everlasting command, a negative binding at all times. He must be our God without interruption, without intermission. We must say with the Psalmist, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee,' Psal. lxxiii. 25.

Now, we must acknowledge God two ways; in our hearts, and in our words and actions.

1st, In our hearts, by entertaining a frame of spirit on all occasions suitable to what he has revealed of himself to us in his word and works, applying the same to ourselves: 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,' Prov. iii. 6. Many that pretend to know God, acknowledge him no more than if they knew him not at all. Like the servant who does as he pleases before his master, never acknowledging him to suit himself to his will more than if he did not know he were his master.

We must thus acknowledge him in all his perfections, carrying ourselves in a suitableness to them. I will instance in a few.

(1.) We must acknowledge him as a spirit, from that consideration serving him in spirit and in truth, John iv. 24; and doing all things with godly simplicity, 1 Cor. i. 12.

(2.) His unchangeableness must be so acknowledged, as to influence us to a firm trust in him, Psal. lxxxix. 34; to constancy and perseverance in the way of God, and not to be



given to change, Prov. xxiv. 21. Yet as God repents him of the evil of punishment that he has spoken, so must we of the evil of sin that we have done, Joel ii. 13.

(3.) His omnipresence must influence us to carry as ever under the eye of God wheresoever we are, Jer. xxiii. 24. and so we own him as witness to our most secret actions.

(4.) His omniscience must influence us to all tenderness, as believing that he sees our thoughts, Mark ix. 4. and every the most secret thing.

(5.) His omnipotence must influence us to fear him, Job vi. 14. not to despise his chastening, nor to rise up against him, but to humble ourselves under his hand, and trust him in the lowest condition. And so of the rest of the perfections of God.

We must thus acknowledge him with respect to his word and his works.

[1] To his word; as,

(1.) Hearing or reading the threatenings thereof against sin, we must acknowledge his justice and truth therein, by approving of them in our hearts, Isa. xxxix. ult. and trembling at his word, Isa. lxvi. 2. Psal. cxix. 120. Otherwise we do not acknowledge the speaker as God.

(2.) Hearing or reading his promises, we must acknowledge him as merciful and true, trusting and believing they shall be all accomplished, and giving thereupon the more cheerful obedience to him, Gen. xxxii. 9. For where God is acknowledged as the giver of the word, the arms of faith and hope will receive it.

[2.] With respect to his works.

(1.) The works of creation: at the view of these we must acknowledge him as the maker of all, infinitely powerful, wise, and good, by praising and magnifying his great name, Psal. viii. and cl. 5:

(2.) Acknowledging him in the works of his providence; as when we meet with a cross providence, we must acknowledge him just, wise, and mighty, by humbling ourselves under his hand, and patient bearing of the stroke, because it is the hand of our God, Psal. xxxix. 9. And when we meet with a mercy, we must acknowledge him to be merciful and gracious, and the giver of every good gift, by confessing ourselves unworthy of it, Gen. xxxii. 10; and giving thanks for it to his name, 1 Thess. v. 18.

(3.) In the great work of redemption, as that wherein his justice, mercy, love, &c. are gloriously displayed, wondering at the glorious contrivance, heartily falling in with it, and laying our salvation on that bottom as firm and sure, becoming the divine perfections, Phil. iii. 3.

*2dly*, We must acknowledge God externally, in our words and actions, Deut. xxvi. 17. by a religious profession before the world of his being our God, and of his truths and ways. Let none scorn a profession of religion; for it is a duty incumbent upon us by virtue of this command. God expressly requires it. 1 Pet. iii. 15. ‘Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.’ It has a promise annexed to it, Rom. x. 9. ‘If thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, &c. thou shalt be saved.’ The contrary is severely threatened, Mark viii. 38. ‘Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.’ It is edifying to others, Phil. i. 12.—14; and brings glory to God, Phil. i. 20. And the withholding of it is an indignity done to God, as if religion were a shameful thing, Luke ix. 26.

This profession is so necessary, that at no time we must deny the faith, the truth, and ways of God. Yet it is neither necessary nor fit every where to profess what we believe, Matth. vii. 6; but in times of persecution we must especially maintain our profession, Heb. x. 23; and when called of God, even to profess before the enemy on whatever hazard, Matth. x. 18.

THIRDLY, This command requires us to worship and glorify God accordingly; that is, as God and our God, Rom. i. 21. Matth. iii. 10. For if we take him for our God, we must worship and glorify him as such, Mal. i. 6.

The worship of God is twofold, internal and external. It is the internal that is here required; the external is but the means of worship commanded in the second commandment. The internal is the main thing; in this chiefly true piety consists, and this is that wherein the life of religion lies. Now, that I may the more plainly lay before you the parts of this internal worship, I shall take them up under these. 1. The duty of our understanding. 2. Of our will. 3. Our affec-

tions. 4. Our conscience. 5. Our memory. 6. *Lastly*, The whole soul, in all its faculties. And by these you will see what it is to worship God in spirit, and to be godly indeed.

*First*, For our minds and understandings, God must be worshipped there. Our minds must not be as dark groves for idolatry or creature-worship, but as lightsome temples for the worship of the true God. Passing what was said of the knowledge of God, we must worship and glorify him internally in our minds,

1. By thinking on him, Mal. iii. 16. That is a black character, Psal. x. 4. ‘God is not in all his thoughts.’ That is our God we love most; what we love most gets most of our thoughts; if we take him, then, for our God, our thoughts must run most towards him. He has distinguished us from brutes by a faculty of thinking, and therefore should our thoughts be most of him, as the most worthy object.

2. By meditating on him, Psal. lxxiii. 6. Fleeting thoughts are not enough; he must be the subject of our fixed meditations. The duty of meditating on God and divine things is a necessary duty, pleasant, profitable, practised by the saints of best note, though the corrupt heart has a peculiar unfitness for it. Live no more in the neglect of this duty: enure yourselves to occasional meditation at any time, and to more solemn and fixed meditation especially in the morning and evening. The Lord’s day in a special manner is designed for this duty. And as in external worship it would be a notable defect to go about other parts of it, and neglect the solemn duties of that day, so in internal worship to go about other duties, and neglect the duty of meditation.

3. By highly esteeming him, entertaining high and honourable thoughts of him, prising him above all, and in our judgment preferring him to all persons and things, Exod. xv. 11. Psal. lxxiii. 25. We are naturally blind to spiritual things; hence arise mean and low thoughts of God. We must shake off these, and labour to screw up our esteem of him, fearing no excess. Whatever is worthy of esteem in the creature, is but as a drop of the ocean of that which is in him.

4. By believing him, Exod. xiv. ult. firmly assenting to the truths of his word upon his testimony, and so to give him the glory of his truth. He is a God that cannot lie; it is contrary to his nature to deceive; for he is truth; and



so the least hesitation about his word is a high dishonour to him. This is a fundamental piece of internal worship; which failing, shakes the very foundation of practical godliness.

*Secondly*, For our will, as it is the leading faculty in all, so it must be in the internal worship of God. In our will he must have internal worship.

1. By chusing of him as our God and portion, Josh. xxiv. 15, 22. of which I spoke before. But this is not to be one single act, but frequently repeated, Psal. xvi. 2. and lxxiii. 25. especially when any person or thing comes in competition with him. The old choice of the saint will still be his new choice, whatever objects present themselves. It is a duty and a pleasure thus to renew our choice of God and Christ. ‘To whom coming as to a living stone; they have come already, but they must be coming still; they have chosen already, but they must chuse him still; especially while so many pretenders to our hearts are about our hands.

2. By making him our chief and ultimate end, 1 Cor. x. 31. As all the good we have is of him, so it should be to him. His glory and honour must be the chief end of our natural, civil, and religious actions, in which they ought all to meet as the lines in the centre. Whatever view we have to ourselves in living and acting, we must have a view beyond that to God himself. We have not God for our God, if he be not the great end and scope of our life, Rom. xiv. 8.

3. By self-denial, Mat. xvi. 24. Self-denial pulls down self from the throne of the heart, that God may have that room which self has usurped, entirely possessed in an unregenerate state, and is still seeking for even in a state of grace. We must no more make ourselves our chief end; God must be master, and self must lacquey at his foot; and what concerns ourselves must be cut and carved as may best serve his honour. We must deny,

*1st*, Our civil self, all our outward comforts and enjoyments, so as to be ready to part with them, sitting loose to them at all times, and actually to forego them, when we cannot keep them and keep the way of duty to God too, Luke xiv. 26.

*2dly*, Our natural self, even our own life, Luke xiv. 26: If God be our God, neither death nor life must separate us from him. We must let life itself go, rather than that our

God should go. All the Lord's people are not martyrs in action, but all are martyrs in resolution.

*3dly*, Our religious self, Luke xvii. 10. Whatever we do or suffer for God, we must beware we put it not in Christ's room, for he will endure no rival. We must renounce our confidence in all, as if we had done nothing.

4. By humility of heart, Mic. vi. 8. whereby, from a sense of our own weakness and unworthiness, we lay ourselves low before the Lord, and give him the glory of all. This humility towards God implies,

*1st*, The keeping up a sense of our weakness and imperfection. Isa. xl. 6. 2 Cor. iii. 5. The humble man will acknowledge that his springs are without himself in God, and that he of himself is but dry and barren, unfit for any good thing, unable for any good work.

*2dly*, The ascribing the praise of all the good we are, have, or can do, to God, and denying it to ourselves, 1 Cor. xv. 8, 9, 10; The humble see themselves decked with borrowed feathers, and therefore acknowledge their debt and holding all of free grace.

*3dly*, Self-loathing because of sin, the sin of our nature, and daily failings, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. As the peacock hangs down his starry feathers while he looks to his black feet, so will the sin that besets the man make him walk humbly with his God.

*4thly*, Keeping within the bounds of our calling, and meddling with nothing beyond our sphere, Psal. cxxxi. 1. If God be our God, he is our great Commander, who has allotted to all their several posts, without which they are not to stir but at his call. And humility will teach a man to keep within the bounds of his station, both because of the authority that set him there, and the sense he has of his having more to do within these bounds than he can well manage.

*Lastly*, A voluntary undertaking of any thing the Lord calls us to, however mean it may be in the eyes of the world. Such was David's dancing before the ark, his chusing to be a door-keeper in the house of God, rather than dwell in the tents of wickedness, Christ's washing his disciples feet, &c.

5. By an entire resignation of ourselves to the will of the Lord, Acts ix. 6. The renouncing of our own will is a chief piece of internal worship. Our will is the great rebel against the will of God; it must be bound hand and foot, and re-

signed. We must be resigned, (1.) To the commanding will of God, that his will must be a sufficient reason of obedience to us, Rom. vi. 17; so that whithersoever the command draws, we must follow, though over the belly of our natural inclinations, Gen. xxii. (2.) To the providential will of God. We must lay our all at his feet, to be disposed of according to his pleasure, Luke xiv. 26; and as the shadow follows the body, so should our will follow the will of God, Psal. xlvii. 4. If it be his will to lift us up, or cast us down, it must be ours too. And the more we lie like a ball at the foot of Providence, the nearer we are to our duty, Phil. iv. 11, 12.

This resignation must be universal, extending to all things absolute, not suspended on any condition, but in every case; cheerful, so as we may say, good is the will of the Lord.

*Lastly*, By patience under crosses and afflictions, whereby a man walks tamely and peaceably under the heaviest yoke the Lord lays on him, Psal. xxxix. 9. And why should we not? He is our God, and does us no wrong; we are ever punished less than our iniquities deserve, Lam. iii. 23. God is wise enough, and knows to guide the world without us. He knows better what is good for us than we do. We have Christ for our example; and if we take God for our God, we must allow of his sovereignty.

*Thirdly*, Here is required the inward worship of our affections, which are to be devoted to God, and wherein he is to have the chief room. The parts of it are these:

1. Love to God, whereby we love him as the chief good, the best of beings, Deut. vi. 5. This holy fire should never be wanting on the altar of our hearts, glowing and flaming. We should love him for himself, his most glorious perfections, and for his goodness to us. We must begin at the last, and rise to the first. This is the comprehensive, natural, never-failing duty.

2. Desires after him, Psal. lxxiii. 25. These are the breathings of a soul touched with the love of God, which tends always to perfect enjoyment; the silent messengers that should be travelling day and night from the bottom of the heart to heaven, Isa. xxvi. 9. We have many wants: to what door should we go for supply but to his, for communion with him here, and full communion hereafter? Phil. i. 23.



And this love and desire must be above all other loves and desires.

3. Delight in him above all persons and things, Psal. xxxvii. 4. whereby we take pleasure in God whom we love. A life without any delight, is both a miserable and sinful life. A life that knows nothing but carnal delights, is brutish. If there be nothing in the world to yield delight to us, is there not a God in heaven to give it? If earthly things delight us, should not God himself be our delight much more? Should not these streams of delight in the creature lead us up to the fountain-head in God.

4. Rejoicing in him above all, Phil. iv. 4. This is delight raised to a high pitch. We should cheer our hearts in God, in his glorious attributes, words, works, &c. Here only we can joy without hazard of overjoying. He is suited to our case, the field in which being purchased, yea, but discovered, we may for joy sell all that we have; and if he be not suited to our mind, our mind is in a bad case.

5. Sorrowing most for offending him, Zech. xii. 10. To offend such a good, kind Father, should of all kinds go nearest our hearts. No trouble in the world, no crosses, should create that degree of grief, that sin should; for there is not so great an evil in the greatest sufferings as in the least sin; neither is the offence of any mortal to be laid in the balance with the offence of a good and gracious God. Tho' our hearts will spring with the touch of a cross, that will be like a rock in respect of sin.

6. Zeal for his honour, and against sin, above all, Rev. iii. 19. Zeal is a fervour of the affections for God, as one we have an interest in, and is a mixture of love and indignation which strongly carry the soul before them, Psal. lxxix. 9. It is an eager concern in the heart, that there be no rival to God within the soul, or without in the world; whereby every piece of dishonour done to God touches a man's heart with that concern which the dishonour of a husband would touch the heart of a wife. It spreads itself to whatever is the Lord's, his people, word, ordinances, works, &c.

7. Fearing him above all, Isa. viii. 13. We must keep up such an awful sense of his majesty, greatness, and goodness, as may awe our hearts from meddling with what will be offensive, and may stir us up to please him in all things. The want of this, as it is a great contempt of that sovereign Being,

so it is the opening of the sluice of sin and wickedness, Psal. xxxvi. 1. Fear of God is twofold; filial and servile. Filial fear is accompanied with love to God, Hos. iii. ult. and makes a man fear sin, not only because of the punishment, but because of the indignity and baseness of the action. Servile fear is only fear of wrath, without any mixture of love. This is sinful, not because men fear wrath, for that is duty, Mat. x. 28. Psal. cxix. 120. but because there is no regard in it to the goodness of God, nor is it mixed with love to him.

8. Hoping in him above all, Psal. cxxx. 7. This hope is a certain expectation of those good things which faith lays hold on, grounded on the word, Psal. cxix. 49. The more good, powerful, and true any one is, the more may be our hope in the same; but there is none so good, powerful, and true as God, in comparison of whom the creatures are but a compound of evil and weakness, and therefore a lie. Where should our hopes be placed, then, but in him? How weak are the pillars they lean on, when created pillars? The soul sinking from hope when looking to the Lord, is a sin as well as misery.

*Lastly*, Trust and confidence in him above all, Isa. xxvi. 4. This is the soul's quiet resting in God in the midst of all tossings from the devil, the world, and the flesh. It is the soul's staying itself on the Lord for through-bearing, holding by his word. Other things might have been mentioned, as gratitude for mercies, &c.

*Fourthly*, As to the duty of the conscience, which makes a part of the internal worship of God, we may take it up in these following particulars.

1. Subjecting itself to God, and to God alone. Conscience is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly, Prov. xx. 27. and to be carried by his hand whithersoever he will. It is his deputy in the soul, and must be subject to him, so as to be given up entirely to him, not to any other, Matth. xxiii. 9. for that is to make a god of the creature. And therefore there is no sin where no law of God is broken; and for conscience to say otherwise, is to betray its trust, and to make an idol of that creature to which it subjects itself.

2. To receive its law from the mouth of God, to be rightly and fully informed of the mind of God with respect to man's

duty, as it is revealed in his word and works: The defect of this makes the eye of conscience so far an evil eye, Matth. vi. 23. It will not excuse that we sin with an erring conscience, Isa. v. 20. for that error of the conscience is a sin, and one sin will not excuse another. If conscience speak not according to the law and testimony, it is because there is no light in it, Isa. viii. 20.

*Lastly*, To accuse or excuse according to that law, Rom. ii. 15. and that exactly and vigorously. Conscience must not be idle, but at its work, giving a verdict, and a right one, upon our actions. It must not pervert the law, and approve what God condemns, nor condemn what God approves; nor go bluntly about its work.

*Fifthly*, The duty of the memory is to remember God, Psal. lxxiii. 6. and keep off from forgetting of him, Jude 17. We must remember his word, John ii. 17. bringing it out of the storehouse of the heart, where it was laid up, for our direction, instruction, comfort, &c. We must remember his works, Job xxxvi. 24. We should be often calling to mind what he has done in his works of creation, his providence towards ourselves, the church and others; and especially the great work of redemption, whereof the sacrament of the supper is a solemn memorial.

*Lastly*, The duty of our whole soul is, that all the faculties thereof be employed in their several operations towards him, so as the whole soul may be as a parcel of candles in one room, each lighted and flaming. Particularly.

1. Prayer and calling on his name, Phil. iv. 6. Prayer is the special duty of the soul, wherein the soul addresses God for all that it stands in need of. And here I mean especially mental prayer, which is always necessary to be joined with vocal; that is, the heart's going along with the words. It is sometimes necessary to be without words, as where we cannot speak but we are overheard, Exod. xiv. 15. There is also ejaculatory prayer, Neh. ii. 4. which may be profitably used amidst our daily employments.

2. Internal praise and thanksgiving, Psal. xlv. 1. The altar of our heart should never be without thank-offerings, because we are ever in God's debt; and our good things received while here are more than our evil things, though the latter are deserved, the former not.

*Lastly*, Giving all obedience to him with the whole soul,



Jer. vii. 23. Our souls must be at his beck in every thing, and in every case.

Now, consider that these duties are here required of us in their perfection. None of them must thrust out another, but each of them appear in its proper place. We are obliged thereby to use all means leading thereto, and abstain from every thing that may hinder the same, both in ourselves and others.

USE 1. The commandment is exceeding broad, Psal. cxix. 96. They but deceive themselves that stick in the letter of it, and take it not up in its spirituality and extent. They falsify the measure, and no wonder they deceive themselves when they measure themselves by it, Rom. vii. 9. Were many of us put to the trial on this command, we would plead not guilty, because not gross idolaters. But, alas! if we viewed this command in its spirituality and extent, we would be forced to plead guilty, in respect of our not knowing and acknowledging God to be the only true God, and our God, and not worshipping and glorifying him accordingly.

2. Let these things serve to convince us of our sin, and deeply to humble us, Psal. xix. 12. This preaching of the commands is a glass held before your face, wherein you may see your spots. O look unto it, that ye may see what are your sins! And when ye go home, go over these things in your meditation.

3. Learn from hence the impossibility of salvation by the way of the law, or keeping the commandments. Ye have heard yet but a part of the explication of one of these commands; but durst ye venture your salvation on the fulfilling of this one part of this one? How then can ye think to be capable enough for them all?

4. See the infinite obligations we lie under to Christ, for that he was made under the law, exactly fulfilled it in every point, and offers us his righteousness, whereby we may answer all the demands of the law in point of justification.

5. See the absolute need ye have of Christ. Look rightly on these commands as your creditors, behold the articles they charge on you as just debt, and ye will see you must have a cautioner. Ye need Christ,

(1.) For justification and pardon, to remove the guilt ye

have contracted. There is need of blood to wash away that guilt.

(2.) For sanctification. Here is the rule of your life. To each of these duties, and other duties, ye must set yourselves. Have ye not need of his spirit to strengthen, incline, and make you persevere therein?

II. I come now to the negative part of this command. 'The first command forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God, and our God; and the giving that worship and glory to any other which is due to him alone.'

There are three sins chiefly forbidden in this commandment. 1. Atheism. 2. Profaneness. 3. Idolatry.

FIRST, Atheism is here forbidden. It is the denying of God, a sin that overturns all religion by the root, Prov. xxx. 6. It is twofold; speculative in the judgment, and practical in the conversation.

*First*, There is a speculative atheism, which has its seat in the corrupt mind of man. It is also twofold; one striking simply at the being of a God, another at the being only of the true God manifested to us in his word. Both these are forbidden here; for the command says two things: I. Thou shalt have a God. 2. Thou shalt have me for thy God.

1. Then there is absolute speculative atheism, when men's hearts are so filled by Satan, that they do not believe there is a God at all, Psal. xiv. 1. I do not think that any person can arrive at a constant, habitual, uninterrupted atheism of this sort, more than they can destroy the being of their own souls, God has so interwoven the notion of his being with the very make of the soul. But such a conclusion they may come to lay down, and labour habitually to maintain it against themselves and others. This is consummate atheism.

There is also an initial atheism; that is, doubting of the being of a God, the mind going from one side to another, doubting whether there be a God or not. This arises from man's natural corruption, and is often carried on by Satanical injections. We have all atheistical thoughts. They may be found both in godly and wicked men. But in the godly especially, as they arise from Satan, they will be found exceeding heavy and tormenting. Men may reason against

them, but the best cure is prayer, with God's manifesting himself to the soul.

Atheism, less or more, is a dreadful sin. 1. It is of a most malignant nature, striking at the very being of God, and so plucking up all religious worship and service to God by the roots: 'For he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is,' Heb. xi. 6. 2. It is most contrary to the light of nature, and does violence even to a natural conscience. It is a flying in the face of nature and revelation at once. 3. It is destructive to human society: for take away the notion of a God from amongst men, there would be no living more than among wild beasts. *Lastly*, It is a sin whereof devils are not guilty; for, however they foster it among men, they yet believe and tremble, James ii. 19. But if nothing else do, death and hell, where there are no atheists nor atheistical thoughts, will cure the disease.

2. There is a comparative speculative atheism, when men, though they deny not the being of a God, yet do not believe the true God, as manifested in the scriptures, is he.—So they have not him for their God, and therefore are atheists in scripture style, Eph. ii. 12. Such are Heathens, Jews, Turks, Deists, Socinians, and others, who do not believe one God in three persons, denying any of the three, 1 John. ii. 23. Such receive an idol of their own fancy, but deny the true God. This is condemned here, and so is all doubting leading thereunto. And the least hankering that makes men come short of a full persuasion of what God is, as he is revealed in his word and works, is a sin here prohibited.

There are two things which ye should take heed of as tending to atheism. 1. The influence of prosperity on a corrupt heart, which is like that of the sun on a dunghill, Prov. xxx. 9. and therefore often is that added to threatenings, 'They shall know that I am the Lord.' This should make afflictions welcome as antidotes against atheism. 2. Doubting or denying of providence, Mal. iii. 14, 15. Psal. lxxiii. 13. If men once get God excluded from the earth, it is a great step to the excluding him out of heaven too.

3. There is practical atheism, which is a denying of God in our works, Tit. i. 16. These have a language for or against God which he understands, yea, even men too sometimes, Psal. xxxvi. 1. It is much alike what principles men



have, when their practice is nothing but a contradiction to them, when the web of principles in their head is every day opened out by their conversation. This practical atheism is opposite to that acknowledgement of God as the true God spoken of before. Accordingly it is twofold.

1st. Practical heart-atheism, which is, when men entertain no frame of spirit suitable to what God has revealed of himself in his word and works, Psal. xiv. 1, 2, 3. And may not that be a confounding question to us on that point, Mal. i. 6. ‘If I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts.’ God is light, which discovers itself wherever it is; but if we look into our hearts, we will quickly find oft-times that he is not there, by an absolute unsuitableness in them to his presence; that they are in no other case than if indeed there were no God; so that if *de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*, how oft and justly are we chargeable as atheists?

To instance in a few things. God is a spirit but how do we put him off with mere bodily service, as if we were serving an idol? Isa. xxix. 13. God is omnipresent; but though we should act as before him every where yet it is scarcely done any where. How often does our heart find a great deal of sinful liberty in one place which it has not in another; and to do that fearlessly in secret, which men would be ashamed to do before a child? He is omniscient; yet what a deal of security do men seem to have from secrecy, while the thoughts of God abide within their own breast, as if he no more saw our thoughts than men do? He is omnipotent; but how soon are we at giving up all for lost in difficulties to us inextricable? and how little awe is there of God on our spirits, when we are in ways wherein his power is engaged against us? What is all this but heart-atheism originally?

If we consider how we handle his word, heard, or read, his promises, threatnings, commands, and how little our hearts are influenced thereby, suitably to what is read or heard, much heart-atheism will appear; so that when we are closing the Bible, or going out of the church-door, the language of our hearts in effect would often be found, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil, for practically they seem to be but idle tales.

If we consider how little God's works influence us, much heart-atheism will appear. I am sure, that men's hearts often, when they behold the works of creation, could do no less than they do, if the world had been made by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, that is, to pass them unregarded. And for his providence under crosses, how often are men like the dog that snarls at the stone, but looks not after the hand that threw it? and in mercies as the fed horse, that greedily falls to his hay, but regards not him that laid it before him, but to kick at him? And as to the work of redemption, it is not seen, believed, or laid stress upon, by the most part of the world; and those that do, how often do they lay their weight on it but at a venture, as afraid it would break with it?

*2dly*, Practical life-atheism, which is when men carry before the world as if there were no God, Psal. xxxvi. 1.—Such are,

(1.) The factors for atheism in the world, who, by their devilish reasonings, mockings, and cavils at religion, do what they can to banish the notion of a God out of the world.

(2.) Those who, as they have no religion, make as little profession of it. God indeed is not their God, and as little do they avouch him to be so. They are none of God's servants, and they will not wear his livery.

3. Those who, whatever they profess, yet live as if there were no God, no heaven, no hell, but the Bible were a fable. There is a spice of this life-atheism in all the irregularities and disorders of our lives wherein our actions do contradict our principles of God.

(4.) *Lastly*, Those who having had a profession, do at length quit it. Their leaf faileth and falleth. [1.] There are some whose leaf fadeth, as the leaf of a tree in harvest, through want of sap from the stock, and so falls off. There are not a few at this day of that sort, who sometimes were blooming professors, but now they have lost leaf as well as fruit; and nothing ailed them to loose it, but just that the root of the matter was never in them. They have drawn back, and have not staid till they had been driven back. [2.] There are some whose leaf falleth, like the leaf of a tree in summer, by a stormy wind of persecution. They would keep their leaf if it would always abide calm; but they cannot abide the shock of persecution, and so, rather than deny

themselves, they will deny Christ before men, Mark viii. ult. and many such our times are likely to produce, because we have other gods before the Lord.

Go home then, and mourn over the sin that some of us have never been troubled about hitherto ; that is, atheism, which is not so rare in the world as is imagined. Thy heart is too kindly a soil for the worst of abominations, to miss any devilish corruption therein, that is going in the world. And apply to Christ for his blood and Spirit, to remove the guilt of this sin, and destroy its power and influence in you.

SECONDLY, Another sin forbidden in this commandment, is profaneness, which is the not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God, and our God, and much more the acting against his honour, quite contrary to those duties of worship and honour that we owe him. It will then be necessary that we look back to those duties of worship, which we mentioned to be those of the mind, will, affections, conscience, memory, and the whole soul, with all its faculties, that we may see what is forbidden, under this head.

*First*, There is a profaneness of the mind, Tit. ii. 15 ; when the minds of men are like a dark grove for idols, confusion, and profaneness, instead of being a lightsome temple to God, where the candle of heavenly light is put out, and darkness from hell takes place instead of it. Consider, then, this profaneness of mind.

1. In opposition to the knowledge of God; and so this command forbids,

*1st*, Ignorance of God and divine things, especially such as are fundamental, Hos. iv. 1, 6. There is a natural ignorance, with which man is born, like a wild ass's colt, that must needs be cured, for it is the sad effect of the loss of original righteousness. There is an affected ignorance among them that have the means, yet, through enmity against God and his law, will not learn, or through laziness and carelessness will not be at the pains, Job xxi. 14.

Ignorance is a mother-sin, as blindness disposes men to fall over every block in their way ; therefore the scripture tells us it is a special destroyer, Hos. iv. 6; and has a most terrible threatening annexed to it, Isa. xxvii. 11 ; ' It is a people of no understanding: therefore, he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will



shew them no favour.' If it is so terrible in those that want the means, how will it be to others?' 2 Thess. i. 8.

But though we be not chargeable with that gross ignorance, we do not satisfy that command, Prov. xxx. 2. How many things are revealed that we ought to know, which we know not? How imperfect and unclear is the knowledge we have of many things? but from the beginning it was not so. And how ineffectual is our knowledge! and what little influence has it on our practice!

*2dly*, Misapprehensions of God, Acts xvii. 28, 29. O how liable are we to these, to apprehend God to be what he is not! When we begin to apprehend him, the first way the heart goes is to misapprehend him. The world is full of this. Seldom is it that the heart does not blot out some of his attributes, misapprehending his word and works. And such are all false opinions concerning him, Rom. i. 21.

2. In opposition to thinking and meditating on God, is forbidden,

*1st*, That profane carelessness of the heart, whereby God is not in all our thoughts, Psal. x. 4. He is our first principle, last end, witness, and judge, so that we should set him always before us, Psal. xvi. 8. But, instead of that, we forget our God, and then forget ourselves, though there is never a moment but we are receiving at his hand, Jer. ii. 32.

*2dly*, The neglect of the great duty of meditation, spending no time on that work, yea, and a disposition of spirit averse to it, and that cannot fix on it. Men's hearts can fix well enough to carnal meditations, that may advance their worldly interest, or gratify their lusts; but to meditations of God they are unstable as water. They will sink and dive to the bottom in these muddy waters, while they will float like a feather in the waters of the sanctuary. And it is as difficult to get the heart off the one as upon the other.

*3dly*, The resisting of the thoughts of God when they bear in themselves on the soul, Rom. i. 28. Sometimes the Lord makes heavenly thoughts dart into the heart for conviction, humiliation, &c. but like a stitch in the side, presently there is a hand laid on it to press it down. Thus men war against God, and will not think on him, and are as not themselves till they be sisted.

3. In opposition to the honourable thoughts of God, required in this commandment, is forbidden,

1st, The want of these honourable thoughts of him, the not esteeming, admiring, and adoring him above all. High thoughts will men have of trifles, that have none of the Highest. If we look to what he is, and consider our thoughts, we will be found most guilty in this point.

2dly, Mean and low thoughts of God and Christ. These are so frequent in the world, that Christ is said to be despised, and not esteemed, Isa. liii. 3; and God contemned by the wicked, Psal. x. 13. Read the thoughts of your heart on the work of your hands in respect of duty, Mal. i. 7, 8.

3dly, Unworthy and wicked thoughts of God, Psal. l. 21. which are heart-blasphemy not to be named. Sometimes these do arise from the corrupt heart by an ordinary influence of temptation, where the heart, like a raging sea, casts up its mire and dirt against heaven; and they follow on a loose and carnal frame, wherein mean thoughts of God have settled themselves; or from some galling of conscience from fear of wrath, while the heart is glued to the sin; or from extremity of trouble, while the spirit is unsubdued. It is a dreadful sin, and has much of hell in it. But there are wicked thoughts, or blasphemous injections, that are immediately from the devil, that come in suddenly, like fiery darts, so as to make a man to shiver, and being continued will sicken the body, and torment the soul extremely. These are not our sins, unless by consenting to them we adopt them, Matth. iv. 9.

4. In opposition to the great duty of believing God, several things are forbidden, some in defect, some in excess.

1st, There is, (1.) Doubting of or questioning the truth of whatsoever we know God has revealed. The queries of the false heart, concerning revealed truths, 'How can these things be?' are a great affront to the veracity of God.—(2.) Unbelief, which gives the lie to the Lord's word, whether doctrines, promises, or threatenings, 2 Kings vii. 19. Deut. xxix. 19, 20. This is the great stumbling-block of the perishing world, and enemy of the saints.—(3.) Misbelief; that is, when men believe sin to be duty, and duty to be sin, Isa. xxvi. 9;—(4.) Heresy, which is a pertinacious defending of any error against a substantial point of truth, Gal. v. 20.—(5.) Lastly, Lesser errors want not their own

sinfulness, as being contrary to revealed truth, that we are obliged to know, and contrary to that believing of God required in his word. On the other hand,

[1.] Vain credulity, when people, through the instability of their minds, lightly embrace doctrines pretended to be from God, without narrowly examining and discovering the truth, 1 John iv. 1. We must answer for what we believe, as well as for what we reject; and therefore the Bereans were commended for searching the scriptures, whether what the apostles taught was agreeable to them. [2.] Tempting of God, Matth. iv. 7. when people cast themselves out of God's way, and yet expect his protection; when out of the way of the command, they look for the benefit of the promise. There is another tempting of God, and that in defect, when people will not believe, unless they see signs and wonders, and cannot take God's bare word. [3.] Carnal security, Zeph. i. 12. when, over the belly of all the threatenings of God, men promise themselves safety in an evil course.

*Secondly*, There is a profaneness of the will. It is a stony heart, enmity against God, having a propensity to evil in it, total in the the unregenerate, partial in the regenerate. This command directs it to God. The profaneness of it lies in a departing from and opposition to God.

1. Whereas it is the duty of our will to take God for our God, and enter into his covenant, and to hold by him as our covenanted God, here are forbidden several pieces of profaneness. As,

*1st*, The total omission of personal covenanting with God, closing with and accepting of God as our God in his covenant. A sad sign of an ungracious heart, Isa. xlv. 3, 5. Eph. ii. 12. What a profane will must that be that will not come under the bond of the covenant? What way do men think that God can be their God if they take him not in his covenant? Ye that never closed with God in a personal covenant, have your religion to begin yet. Think on it, ye old neglecters, and ye young ones, that have never ratified with your own consent the covenant made for you in baptism.

*2dly*, The not renewing our covenant with God, and repeating our choice. Our frequent backslidings require it, Jer. l. 4. What hope can we have that so often go a-whor-



ing from our Lord and Husband, if we do not return and renew the marriage-covenant? The neglect of this is a fatal mistake at this day, when judgment is at the door. O! what should we do in such a time, but humble ourselves for breach of covenant, and renew covenant with God, under the view of these evil days? If this were done, it would be a good preparation, and would make way for national renewing our covenant-engagements.

*3dly*, Hypocritical covenanting, consenting in words to the covenant, but not taking God for our God with our hearts, Hos. viii. 2, 3. They that would take God for their God, must put away their strange gods, and open their hearts that the King of glory may come in. But, alas! many give him the hand, who give him not the heart. He is our God to whom our hearts are devoted. Though we give God the best of words, if our lusts get the best of our hearts, we are dealing hypocritically with God.

*4thly*, Dealing falsely in the covenant, Psal. l. 16, 17. O what matter of shame and confusion is there for us here? What children of Belial are we, whom national, baptismal, and personal covenants will not bind! How often after vows have we made enquiry, returned to those sins which we have renounced, and engaged against, eat in the best words that ever we spoke in making a covenant, and thrown away the happiest bonds that we ever came under!

*5thly*, Covenanting and engaging against God, his cause and way, and binding ourselves to sin; whether rashly in our private walk, by the vehemency of our passion, Eccl. v. 6; or more deliberately, in obedience to authority, Hos. v. 11. This has been, is at this day, and is still like to be more, the sin and snare of this land. But let us remember, that our covenant with God must regulate all other engagements we come under; and if once we take God to be our God, our hands are bound up from taking any other in his place. For 'we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth,' 2 Cor. xiii. 8.

*Lastly*, All compact with the devil. Such is the corruption of human nature, that men will take the devil for their god. Here is forbidden, (1,) All witchcraft, sorcery, malice, and devilry. These renouncing God, become the devil's vassals and servants in a special manner, to have communion with him here in mischief and wickedness, and communion

with him in hell fire. Two things readily occasion it: either discontent with one's own condition, or desire of revenge, which ye should beware of. (2.) All using of spells and charms, whether for knowing of secret things past or to come, for curing or preventing of diseases in men or beasts, or for any other effect whatsoever. This is an implicit compact with the devil, which those that are far from express covenanting with him may fall into. Both are condemned, Deut. xviii. 10, &c. There are, alas! many of these things which are unworthy to be named; but take this rule in this case, That whatsoever is brought to pass by means, which neither by the appointment of God, nor the nature of the mean used, can be expected, is from the devil. The sacraments and medicines are means of divine institution, and by the blessing of God, when used in faith, are conducive to the ends for which they are appointed. But the truth is, spells, charms, &c. are the devil's sacraments. For what virtue can there be in words, a key, riddle, laying such or such things above a door-head, &c. to produce the effects expected by miserable creatures from them? But they are Satan's sacraments, that must be used with a kind of truth or belief of the success, at which the devil produceth the desired effect sometimes, God permitting it: for he cannot always do it.

2. Whereas it is a duty of this command to make God our chief end, it forbids,

1st, Men-pleasing, Gal. i. 10. There is a holy man-pleasing which we should all learn, if we would please God, Rom. xv. 2. 'Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.' Paul was dexterous at that holy art, 1 Cor. ix. 19.—22. turning himself into all colours, but black, to please them, for their good. But this sinful man-pleasing is, when we set ourselves to please men without regard to the pleasing of God, proposing their pleasure as our only or chief end, Tit. ii. 9. Compare Eph. vi. 6. Col. iii. 22. And this we are guilty of, either when we do a sin to please men, or do a good thing, or lawful, more to please them than God.

2dly, Not making God our end at all, Psal. lxxxvi. 14. when God's honour has no place at all in our projects and actions. Thus he who should have the chief place in all we do, has none; the chief corner-stone is not admitted into the unsanctified building, but self is the beginning, middle, and

end. Many such black pieces without mixture are in the web of our conversation.

*3dly*, Not making God our chief end, when, though we have an eye to God in our actions, yet not the chief eye; not seeking him above all, in all, and beyond all, 1 Cor. x. 31. Psalm lxxiii. 25. Man's will at his creation was made chiefly looking to God; and the least deviation from this is our sin. But O how often doth our respect to God lie under, and that to ourselves a-top! God is made the mean, and ourselves the great end. Many pieces of the saints religion, and all the religion of others, are rather a serving themselves of God than a serving of God.

3. Whereas self-denial is a duty of this command, it forbids,

*1st*, Self-seeking. Not that we may not at all seek ourselves, but we must not make ourselves our only and chief end, Phil. ii. 21. That is sinful seeking, when our own things exclude Christ's things, or are above the things of Christ; when, neglecting God, we seek only our own profit or pleasure; or when in any thing we have no view beyond these to God. In natural, civil, or religious actions, men may seek their own profit and delight, Prov. xxvii. 23. Eccl. ii. 24. and ix. 7, 8. Cant. i. 2. But these must be directed towards God, being sought, that thereby we may be in the better capacity to serve our God. They must be used as stage-coaches to help us on our way, not as beds to lie down in and rest there. But O what guilt is contracted in these matters! What self-seeking is chargeable on us,

(1.) As to natural actions, Zech. vii. 6. having no higher end in these than ourselves, no respect to the command of God, but our own appetite; not to fit us for the duties of our general or particular callings, but to please ourselves.

(2.) In civil actions, Prov. xxi. 4; no eye to God's command, no eye to his honour; but to our own wealth and outward estate. This was the sin of the old world, Matth. xxiv. 38. Luke xvii. 27, 28. But religion teaches to eat and drink, because God has said, 'Thou shalt not kill;' to marry, because he has said, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery;' to work, because he has said, 'Thou shalt not steal,' and that they may honour the Lord with their substance.

(3.) In religious actions, Prov. xv. 8. How often is religion made to serve men's interest, and lacquey at the feet of



carnal projects? What self-seeking is there in our religion, seeking worldly advantage, credit, and a great name, our own peace, and welfare for eternity at best, which is but self-seeking, if we see not that in God which makes us seek him for himself.

*2dly*, Self-love, 2 Tim. iii. 2. Love ourselves we may, our souls, our bodies; but the love of God must regulate our love to ourselves, and we must love ourselves in God and for God, not more than God, nor as much, Matth. xxii. 37, 38, 39. The love of God is the first command. Our neighbour must be loved with an inferior sort of love, not as our God, but as ourselves: therefore the love of ourselves must be inferior to that of God. Now, sinful self-love is that inordinate affection which we bear to ourselves, without due subordination to God, a love of ourselves that carries us off our duty to God. This prevails over us when we are not ready to sacrifice our all to God at his call, Luke xiv. 26. Hence proceeds defection from the truth in time of trial, the gratifying of ourselves at any time at the expence of God's displeasure.

*3dly*, Self-pleasing, Rom. xv. 1. It is a narrowness of spirit, whereby, if we can please ourselves, we value not the pleasing of others for their good, as if we had been only born for ourselves. It is a sin that is highly displeasing to God, and the bane of society, wherein men must retrench something from themselves to please others, otherwise they will be as briars and thorns continually in the sides of one another: for what can be expected there where each will needs have his own way of it? Upon this it is that the using or not using of indifferent things is built.

*4thly*, Self-confidence, whereby men lean to the broken reed of their own wisdom and their own strength, instead of leaning to God, Prov. iii. 5. and xxviii. 26. It carries men off from God, and brings down a curse on that in themselves which they lean unto; their parts, their pains, abilities, resolutions, &c. Jer. xvii. 5. There is much sin this way.

*5thly*, Self-conceit, Prov. xxvi. 12. It is men's blindness and ignorance that makes them so. Were their eyes opened, they would see they were nothing. Self-jealousing becomes us better, who have so little to make any good of.

*Lastly*, Self-righteousness. This is the worst kind of selfishness, whereby men, puffed up with an opinion of their own

works, put them in Christ's room, and look to procure the favour of God by them, Isa. lviii. 3. This is a subtle idol, venting itself many ways; as (1.) Reckoning more on the quantity than the quality of duties, Luke xviii. 11. (2.) More on the quality of duties, when they are done vigorously than on our interest in the blood of Christ. (3.) Expecting returns of favour or debt from the well-doing of our duty. And (4.) Fretting and rising of the heart against God under disappointments, &c.

4. Whereas humility of heart is required in this command, there is forbidden in it, pride of heart, with all the branches of that cursed tree. It is a setting up of a man's self instead of God; a swelling of the empty heart, that is most hateful to God, 1 Pet. v. 5. a sin that destruction naturally follows. It has many poisonous branches; for it turns itself into many shapes, all here forbidden; as,

*1st*, Counterfeit humility. Pride often goes abroad under the mask of humility, as the devil transforming himself into an angel of light. There was as much pride in the disfigured faces of the Pharisees, (Mat. vi. 16.) as in the proud looks of others; in Diogenes, as in Plato. Men had need take heed they deceive not themselves; for pride of heart may put them upon, and make them please themselves in great external humiliations.

*2dly*, Insensibleness of our own weakness, sinfulness, and insufficiency, Hab. ii. 4. There is little impression of that on our hearts for the most part; and when at any time it is made, how quickly does it go off? for our hearts are like a stiff stick, that will quickly lose the bend. This insensibleness vents itself in, (1.) A woful self-sufficiency, whereby men are carried off from depending on God, and hanging continually about his hand, Jer. ii. 31. (2.) A miserable security as to sin, especially sins of the grosser sort, to which we think we have no need to take heed. But if the pride of our hearts were fallen, we would fall in with the warning, 1 Cor. x. 12. 'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' (3.) Rigid censuring and rejecting of those we judge have sinned. What is the cause of that, but the beam of pride and insensibleness of our own weakness in our own eye? Matth. vii. 1, 2, 3. Therefore the apostle recommends lenity and meekness upon this consideration, Gal. vi. 1

*3dly*, Meddling with things without our sphere, Psal. cxxxi. 1, 2. thrusting ourselves on duties that are not the duties of our station. This proceeds from pride of heart, that waits not for God's call, but invades the province given of God to others. Uzziah smarted for this; as did also Uzzah.

*Lastly*, Refusing any duty we are called to for the meanness of it. It is pride of heart that reckons any thing unbecoming us that God requires of us; yet in many cases our honour with us takes place of God's honour; and men not only do not their duty, but scorn to do it. God says, seek my face, be reconciled to me; but they scorn to do it. They may honour God by submitting to instruction, the discipline of Christ's house; but they scorn to do it as unbecoming them, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

5. Whereas resignation to the will of God is our duty required in this commandment, here is forbidden.

*1st*, All even the least discontent with our lot, or any thing that God puts in it. If God be our God, he must chuse our inheritance for us, Psal. xlvii. 4. It is a sad character to be complainers, viz. of their lot, Jude 16. that blame or are angry at their lot, *Gr.* A person has something in his state and condition that is not according to his mind and will, a husband a wife of a disagreeable temper, something they want which they would fain have, something they have that they would fain be free of, and they fret themselves, because what God has made crooked they cannot make straight. It is straight enough to God's will, though not to thine, Job xxxiv. 33. The consequence of that discontent is, We will not have this man to reign over us. It is people's duty not to quarrel with their lot, and be always screwing up their lot to their mind, but to bring their will to their lot, because it is God's will.

*2dly*, An unsanctified contentment with their lot; and that is, when people carry easily under any hardship in their lot, but not upon the Christian principle of resignation to the will of God. There are many other ways to satisfy a discontented mind; business and company may put it out of their heads, taking that content in one creature-comfort which they cannot get in another, some in a lawful, others in an unlawful way, consulting of their own peace. But in



the mean time the consideration of the will of God does not prevail with them to a contented resignation.

*3dly*, The bearing of any hardship in our lot as just, but no satisfaction with it as good, Isa. xxxix. ult. What he does, is not only well done, but best done. It reflects dishonour on God, only to think the work of his providence towards us to be tolerable. Surely we come so far short of our duty, as we do not with satisfaction acquiesce in the hardest piece of our lot, as best for us.

6. *Lastly*, Whereas patience is here commanded under crosses, here is forbidden,

*1st*, All impatience, grudging, murmuring, and quarrelling under the hand of God, Psal. xxxvii. 7, 8. This is a fire kindled by the devil, by striking a proud heart against firm providence, firm as mountains of brass. It is kindled in men's breasts by the heart's rising against the cross. It often sends out its hellish smoke in passionate expressions by the mouth, and scorches others by the sinful deeds it puts them on: for such are as madmen throwing about firebrands, arrows, and death. It makes a man an enemy to himself; and flies up against God, accusing him of injustice, folly, and cruelty.

*2dly*, Insensibleness under the hand of God, Isa. xlii. 25. who stand unmoved under afflictions, as if they were stocks and stones, and cry not when he bindeth them. Thus men are several ways guilty. (1.) Sometimes they are brutish under afflictions, and will groan in their troubles like sick beasts, but nothing more. (2.) Stupid and indolent, without sense of trouble. If they be not the better, they are as little the worse of it. (3.) A Roman courage and briskness of spirit, that will not stoop under what they meet with. And, (4.) patience perforce; they bear the yoke, because they cannot get it off, and they will not worry in the band.

*3dly*. There is a profaneness of the affections, Rom. i. 25, 26. The affections or passions in themselves are neither good nor evil; but they should be consecrated to God chiefly and to their proper objects in God, and then they are good. But being denied to God, or set on improper objects, they are profaned; and if they be given to their proper objects as much and more than to God, that is idolatry; of which I am to speak afterwards.

1. Then, whereas it is commanded here to love God, there is forbidden,

*1st*, All want, yea and weakness, of love to God. It is a prophaneness of heart to be coldrife in love to the most lovely object, this being especially the principal duty of holiness. *2dly*, Love to those things we should hate. How often is our love mislaid thus? The corrupt heart fastens on those things that are like itself. *3dly*, Hatred of God, and enmity against him, Rom. i. 30. This vents itself, (1.) In secret wishes there were no God, Psal. xiv. 1. (2.) That he were not such a God as he has revealed himself in his word, not just, holy, &c. (3.) In risings of the heart against his holy law, which is a transcript of his nature. *4thly*, Hatred of his people that bear his image, for that they are strict and holy in their lives. That is malignancy. *Lastly*, Hatred of his ordinances, work and interest, and of his kingdom in the world.

2. Whereas our desires should go out after God, here is forbidden.

*1st*. All want and weakness of desires after God, Psal. x. 4. How often are our hearts free of these, no breathings no longings after the Lord? How weak and languishing, while desires after created things throng in one upon another? These can have no end, while the other have no beginning.

*2dly*, Desires after unlawful things which we should abhor. Though these desires be not accomplished, we must not wipe our mouths, and say, we have not sinned, Rom. vii. 7. They are the breathings of the corrupt heart after sinful things, suitable to the corrupt nature.

*3dly*, Aversion to God and communion with him, Job xxi. 14. This is a backwardness in the heart to the duties of communion with God, when the heart, instead of flighting towards him, draws back, like a refractory backsliding heifer, that slides back, and will not let on the yoke. A sin which all have reason to be humbled for.

3. Whereas it is our duty to delight and rejoice in the Lord, this command forbids,

*1st* The omission of that duty which God so peremptorily requires, Phil. iv. 4. 'Rejoice in the Lord always: and again Isay, Rejoice.' Think not little of this. What husband would take it well, if his wife had no delight in him? and with what confidence can we call God our God, if we

know nothing of delighting and solacing ourselves in him? It is natural to us to delight in our comfortable relations; and so it is to the new nature to delight in God.

*2dly*, Deadness in duties, going to them, and going on in them, without any spiritual relish, Rev. iii. 1. even as we converse with those in whose company we have no pleasure. This is the plague of the generation, who, if they be not profane, are cold and formal. Our services look not like that of the living God, but a dead idol. There is no need to make Abraham children of stones, for they are stones already.

*3dly*, Wearying in and of his service, Amos viii. 5. Hence wandering in duties, for the heart is away; any thing is enough, and the only care is to get the duty over as a task, for there is no delight in God, or communion with him, Mal. i. 13.

*Lastly*, Carnal desires and joys. Not that all delight and joy in the creature is sinful; for God replenished the world, so as not to serve man's necessity only, but also his delight. But they are carnal and sinful, (1.) When they are on unlawful objects, and men go over the hedge of the law to seek what to delight themselves in. (2.) When they are excessive, though on lawful objects; which is, [1.] When people have no eye to God in them, as not taking them with thankfulness out of his hand, and to use them as what may fit them for the service of God in their general or particular callings; but exclude the thoughts of God out of them, either as the principle or end of them. [2.] When they so carry out the heart, as to unfit us for the service of God, and slacken our delight in the Lord; then is the handmaid taken into Sarah's bed. [3.] When men love them more than God, 2 Tim. iii. 4.

4. Whereas it is our duty to sorrow for offending God, this command forbids,

*1st*, Hardness of heart and impenitency, Rom. ii. 5. To move us to sin is easy, but to move us for it is difficult.—How can we pretend God is our God, if his honour be not dear to us; if the grieving of his Spirit be not grievous to us? But this is a main plague of the generation.

*2dly*, Hiding of sin, which is most contrary to the nature of sorrow, Prov. xxviii. 13. This is done, (1.) By denying of guilt, Prov. xxx. 20. (2.) By extenuating it; whereas,



if sorrow for it were deep enough, it would aggravate it, Luke xv. 18, 19. (3.) By transferring the guilt on others, as did Adam his sin on Eve. (4.) By palliating and excusing it, as did Saul in the affair of the expedition against the Amalekites.

*Lastly*, Thinking or speaking of our sins with pleasure, whereby they are re-acted, and the guilt doubled in the sight of God; and much more laughing at them, and making a mock or jest of them, Prov. x. 23. and xiv. 9. So they glory in their shame, and make a mock of affronting God.

5. Whereas zeal for God is here commanded, there is forbidden.

*1st*, Lukewarmness and indifferency in the matters of God, Rev. iii. 16. Zeal is counted madness by the world; but no body wants zeal for something, but few have it for God. This holy fire is almost worn out in our day, because few have God for their God; and they that have, glorify him not as God. A chill cold has benumbed our spiritual senses. Since the Lord brought this church out of the fire, we have lost our fire-edge. We are fiery enough in our own matters, but very coldrife in God's matters. That coldness of affections, binds men down in the concerns of Christ's kingdom as managed in their own breasts, and then binds them down in these as managed in the world.

*2dly*, Corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal, Rom. x. 2. such as the disciples had in their Master's cause, when they were for commanding fire to come down from heaven to consume the Samaritans, for not receiving him, Luke ix. 54. Zeal is such, (1.) When it proceeds merely from a hotness or keenness of the natural temper, so that men are hot in all things, in their own matters as well as God's. (2.) When it is not proportioned to the weight of matters, Matth. xxiii. 23. (3.) When the heat strikes most outward against the sins of others, Matth. vii. 4. (4.) When it carries men to that unto which they are not called of God. (5.) When it swallows up all pity to the offenders, 2 Cor. xii. 21.

6. Whereas this command requires us to fear God, it forbids,

*1st*, All rashness and irreverence in the service of God, Psal. lxxxix. 7. His omnipresence should strike an awe on us at all times; and his special presence should strike a special awe on us when we approach his presence in duties,

But, O ! how do we rush into it without fear, as the horse rusheth into the battle !

*2dly*, Unconcernedness of spirit at his threatening word and alarming dispensations, the general sin of the present time, Amos iii. 8. Who trembles at his word, though by terrible things he is answering us ? Who is preparing to meet him in the way of his judgments ?

*3dly*, Presumptuous sinning over the belly of fair warning, both by the word and providences, Psal. xxxvi. 1. How do men count the darts of the word and conscience as stubble, and laugh at the shaking of his spear ! We are incorrigible under judgments, as if we would bid a defiance to heaven, and desire him to do his worst, Jer. viii. 6.

*4thly*, Bold and curious searching into God's secrets, which he hath thought meet to keep hid from us. Such is consulting with the devil, or those that have the black art, as Saul did with the witch of Endor, consulting with dumbies, palmisters, fortune-tellers, using any means whatsoever not appointed of God to know our fortune, as it is called, &c. Deut. xxix. ult. These things are but the taking of the devil's key to open God's cabinet.

*5thly*, A superstitious fear, a fear where no fear is by God's appointment, of which they have most that have little of the fear of God. Such is that foolish fear that ariseth from vain dreams, observing of freets, such and such times as unlucky, reckoning such and such things uncanny and unsonsy, without any ground from the word of God, or from solid reason.

*Lastly*, A slavish servile fear of God, arising from hard thoughts of God, and banishing the love of God out of the heart.

7. Whereas hope in God is required in this command, it forbids,

*1st*, Presumption, which is an unwarrantable hope in God, not according to his word, which overlooks his justice, holiness, and greatness, Deut. xxix. 19. and over the belly of these, promises mercy.

*2dly*, Despair, Gen. iv. 13. when people give up with all hope, as if their sins and misery were above God's mercy, power and grace, and the efficacy of his Son's blood.

8. *Lastly*, Whereas trust and confidence in God is required in this command, it forbids,

1st, All distrust and diffidence, anxiety with respect to his providence, when people cannot fix their hearts for provision, protection, &c. in his way, on the promises, but distrust them.

2dly, All rashness and vain confidence, attempting any thing without a warrant from God, and promising themselves success therein, without acknowledging God in it. A sin very frequent in our day.

Fourthly, There is a profaneness of the conscience here forbidden, Tit. i. 15. And there is condemned here,

1. The making men lords of our faith and conscience, which is, in effect, to make them our God, 2 Cor. i. 24. Matth. xxiii. 9. There use not to be wanting such as would model the consciences of all men to their humours, and will have their will taken for law; and they readily find those that walk willingly after the commandment, to whom the commandment of men is the great rule. When therefore a man embraces any thing for religion on the mere authority of men, he sets up another god before the Lord.

2. Blindness and misinformation of conscience, Isa. v. 20. This is a setting up of our consciences instead of God, whose deputy only it is, and whose office it is only to declare the mind of God. So that declaring and urging its own mistakes instead of God's commands, it rises against this command, and this is matter of humiliation: For who can understand his errors?' Psal. xix. 12.

3. Inactiveness and unfaithfulness of the conscience, whereby it does not effectually check for sin, nor incite to duty. Thus God is rejected in so far as his work in the soul committed to the conscience is neglected. How many are there whose consciences give them all ease in their sinful courses, and that cannot speak but on the grossest faults? and how remiss and slack is it in all?

Fifthly, There is a profaneness of the memory here forbidden. For whereas it is a duty of this command to remember God, his word and works, that we may think on him, love, fear, and esteem him; so,

1. Forgetting of God is here forbidden, Jer. ii. 32. This is one of the great sources of all the wickedness in men's hearts and lives. We do not remember with whom we have to do; therefore we do what our corrupt inclinations lead us to. We forget his word, his commands, his threatenings,



his promises; therefore we sin fearlessly, and serve him faintly, as working for nought. We forget his works, therefore his mercies engage us not, nor his judgments fright us. Our memories in spiritual things are like a sieve in the water, leaking vessels that quickly let all slip. It is not only our misery, but our sin, which we have to be humbled for.

2. Remembering what we should forget. O how tenaciously does it hold those things that should be forgotten! An injury done to us will be fresh and green in our minds, when all the love of God in sending Christ to be the Saviour of sinners, will be quite gone out of our heads. It will much sooner turn up old sins with delight, than old mercies with thankfulness.

*Lastly*, There is a profaneness of the whole soul, wherein all the faculties thereof cast in something of their corruption to provoke the eyes of the Lord's jealousy. And,

1. Whereas prayer is required here, particularly that of the heart, this command forbids,

1st, The total neglect of prayer, when people do not so much as make a fashion of it in secret or in their families. That God is our God, how shall it be known if we do not pray to him? They that take idols for their gods, pray to them; and with what face will prayerless persons pretend that the living God is theirs?

2dly, The neglect and unfrequency of ejaculatory prayer, 1 Thess. v. 17. O but the so great neglect of this speaks forth the unholiness of our hearts! Are we ever but we are needing something from heaven? are not new snares and temptations still coming in our way? why are we so unacquainted with this short way of communion with God? It needs mar no business, it needs no secret place.

3dly, Not praying in spirit, when we pray with our mouths; so that all our prayers are but outward worship, lip-labour, not heart-work, John iv. 24. Thus we become guilty many ways. (1.) When all our prayers are but the exercise of a gift, not performed with faith, love, fear, &c. Such are all the prayers of hypocrites. (2.) When the heart goes not along with our words, but remains dead, stupid, and senseless in our addresses to God, as if we were speaking to a dead idol, or to a man who must judge by our words what we would have, because he sees not the heart. (3.) When the heart contradicts our words, as praying that God would take

away sin, which we have no will to part with, that he would give us that grace which we have no desire after, or that he would keep us from the temptations which we are longing for. (4.) When the heart wanders in prayer, going after other things, when we are before the Lord.

*4thly*, Profane prayers to God for mischief to fall on ourselves or others; which are all the prayers that some use; and are more frequent with others than their solemn prayers.

2. Whereas internal praise and thankfulness is required here, there is forbidden,

*1st*, Unthankfulness, the crying sin of the generation, on which God has heaped so many mercies. Ah! how do we receive our mercies, as if they were debts! When we want, perhaps we will cry; but when we have got the mercy, we are like the nine lepers, who forgot to return to thank their healer. There is no grateful sense of the Lord's goodness on our spirits, and so there is none on our lives.

*2dly*, Ascribing any good we have or can do, to some other quarter than to God, the true fountain of all. (1.) To fortune and good luck. How often will men acknowledge their good luck, while they overlook a good God? (2.) To ourselves, Deut. viii. 17. How ready are we to ascribe our success to our own wit, pains, or industry, like those who sacrificed to their own net, and burnt incense to their own drag? Hab. i. 16; (3.) Or to ascribe it to any other creature. The instruments of our success will be thanked, when God is overlooked.

*Lastly*, Whereas we are required to give to God the obedience of our whole souls, here is forbidden. 1. Slighting and despising God and his commandments, making no account of them, and the obedience due to them, Deut. xxxii. 15. 2. Resisting and grieving his Spirit, stifling its motions, and refusing to hearken to its suggestions, Eph. iv. 30.

**THIRDLY**, This command forbids idolatry, which is the giving that worship and glory to any other which is due to God alone. It is twofold, gross external idolatry, and subtle heart-idolatry.

*First*, As to gross idolatry, this command condemns,

1. The heathens, whose religion brought in a multiplicity of gods. For having lost the right knowledge of the true God, the notion of God was like a broken looking-glass, where every part represents a small face, though when entire

is represented one only. The worship of the sun seems to be among the most ancient kinds of idolatry, together with the moon and stars, Job xxxi. 26, 27. And great men deified after their death became objects of worship. Thus at length they came to have a multitude of gods and goddesses.

2. The Papists, whose religion is nothing but the great apostasy from Christianity, headed by Antichrist. They are guilty of gross idolatry.

1st. They worship the saints departed, especially the virgin Mary, in whose worship they are so profuse, that they may be called Marians rather than Christians. To the saints they pray, make vows, swear by them, consecrate altars and temples to them, and offer incense. All which are pieces of religious worship due to God alone. And they profess they place their hopes and confidence in them, Matth. iv. 10. contrary to God's express command, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'

2dly, They worship angels, pray to them to bestow good things on them, and to protect them from evil; and especially the guardian angel, which they allege is allotted to every one, expressly contrary to the authority of God, Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

3dly, They worship the bread in the sacrament; for as soon as the priest has consecrated it, he falls down on his knees and worships it; then he lifts it up above his head, that the people may see it; and then they worship it too.

4thly, They worship the cross, the tree itself on which they pretend Christ died, and the image of it. They bow their knees to it, and kiss it, pray to it, and consecrate temples and altars to it.

Lastly, They worship the reliques of saints, not only their bodies, but what belonged to them while they lived, their bones, blood, flesh, teeth, hair, clothes, shoes, belts, &c. They place these things on the altar, carry them about in processions, give them to the people to touch or kiss, fall down and worship before them. And all this while they keep up the scriptures, which the apostles left, from the people. So that Popery is but heathenism in a new dress.

Secondly, As to subtle heart-idolatry, that is more extensive. Men commit this idolatry with the creatures, when their mind, will, and affections are set on the creature, as much



or more than on God. So covetousness is called idolatry. Now, we are guilty of this idolatry,

1. When we love any thing as much or more than God, Matth. x. 37. For that is our god that gets most of our hearts; and that must needs be our idol that gets more of our love than God gets. Thus often we are found idolizing ourselves, the world, our lawful comforts, and relations. O how disorderly does the pulse of our affections beat! How violent are they towards the creature, but how weak and languishing towards God! The fire of love to God is oft-times like a fire of straw, that makes a sudden blaze and then dies; when that of love to the creature is like a fire of juniper that burns long, and is not soon quenched. This excessive love to the creatures appears, (1.) In the high esteem of them above God, and the communications of his grace. (2.) In the great eagerness that is used in the pursuit of them, more than in seeking of God and his favour. (3.) In the greater uneasiness in the want of them, than in that of the consolations of God.

2. When men desire any thing as much or more than God, Phil. iv. 6. How extravagant are the desires of the heart! Many things are desired more than the one thing needful. Our desires after created things had need to have their wings clipped, while the wings of desire towards God are far from being grown. How readily would we be filled if we knocked as eagerly at God's door as at that of the creatures? Try then what it is that of all things thou desirest most; That is thy God.

3. When we delight and rejoice in any thing as much or more than God, Luke x. 20. For what is a man's choice, and most suitable to his heart, he will delight and rejoice most in it. O what idolatry will this discover! How often is it found, that men will delight and rejoice more in a good bargain than in the everlasting covenant; in husband, wife, and children, more than in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost! in a good farm or store-room, that in the field of the gospel; where the treasure is, there will the heart be also; in a good suit of clothes more than in the righteousness of a Mediator.

4. When we sorrow more, or as much, for any thing as the offending of God. That is a sorrow of the world, 2 Cor. vii. 10. that discovers the idolizing of the creature. The of-

fence of man is often more at heart than the offence of God; and people will be at more pains to gain reconciliation with them than with the Lord himself. A small cross or loss in the world will draw tears, when sin will not draw a sigh from us; and ordinarily our afflictions lie more heavy on us than our sins.

5. When we have as much or more zeal for any thing than for God and his honour. Thus self is idolized, men being far more sensibly touched by any thing that reflects on themselves than on God. How often do men unmoved behold God's name dishonoured, while, if ye but touch them in their reputation and honour, ye will find they are not drones in their own cause, though they are so in God's! So men idolize their own conceits, being, as the Pharisees, much more zealous for their own traditions than God's commandments, for their own opinions than moral duties.

6. When we fear any person or thing more than God, Prov. xxix. 25. The greatest fear being due to God, if we fear any person or thing more than him, we idolize it. Thus men make a god of man, yea, and of the devil. And the fear of the wrath of man will have far more influence than of the wrath of God. This, in a time of persecution, is a special snare.

7. When we have more or as much hope in any thing as in God. Yet alas! how often will the promises of men revive us, when all the promises of God cannot do it!

8. *Lastly*, When we have more or as much confidence and trust in any thing, as in God, Jer. xvii. 5. Thus, power, wealth, strength, gifts, and abilities, are idolized, and whatever men trust more to than to God.

If it be asked, Whether it consists with the state of grace to have our love and affection more on any creature than on God? *Ans.* 1. We must distinguish betwixt the inward disposition of the soul, the habit of love, desire, &c. and the acts thereof. The habit of love, desire, &c. towards God in a godly soul, is always more firmly rooted in his heart, than the habit of love to any creature, Eph. iii. 18. But yet the acts of love and desire towards the creature may be more strong under temptation; but that is their sin. 2. The strength of our affections is to be distinguished from the commotion of them, which sometimes may be greater and more sensible in the affection that is less. For, as the great-

est joy is not always expressed in laughter, so the greatest affection has not always the greatest sensible stirring with it. But if people be solidly minded, and willing to forsake all for Christ, and to displease any rather than him, though they be more sensibly moved in their affection to earthly things, their affections are not therefore more on them than him.

I shall now shut up all with the consideration of these words, *before me*. ‘These words, *before me*, in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh special notice of, and is much displeased with the sin of having any other god.’

*First*, God taketh special notice of the sin of having any other god.

1. He taketh special notice of the gross sin of idolatry. He has a jealous eye on it, and will not overlook it; for it is spiritual adultery; and the husband will overlook many faults in his wife, who will not overlook that. Idolaters have their fig-leaf covers for their idolatry. How do the Papists set their wits on the rack to frame such nice and subtle distinctions as may palliate their horrid idolatry! But though they may deceive the simple with these things, yet they cannot blind the eyes of the all-seeing God.

Seeing God takes such notice of it, how lamentable is it that idolatry makes such vast progress in this covenanted land, and is not duly noticed! How sad is it, that the sin and dishonour against God is not noticed, so as to be mourned over, and to take notice of the danger of it, and that the government takes not notice of it to repress it! This is a sad sign of the danger of being over-run with it.

2. God takes special notice of heart idolatry, of whatever possesseth his room in the heart. That is a subtle kind of idolatry, so hid that others cannot, nay men themselves do not always, perceive what it is that is their idol. But God sees it very well.

(1.) The idol may be of a spiritual nature, which the man cannot discern till the law be carried home on the soul in its spiritual extent. Thus Paul’s duties and seeming holiness were his idol, Rom. vii. 9.

2. It may lie in lawful things. Things unlawful in themselves may quickly be seen with the snare in them. It is easy to discern the devil when he appears with his cloven foot, so to speak: but it is not so easy to see a man’s ruin



lying in houses and lands, husband, wife, and children, goods and gear: yet these may be the idols.

(3.) The idol may go under the name of an infirmity. Thus many deceive themselves with entertaining reigning sins, under the name of infirmities.

(4.) Self-love acts its part here, being ready to magnify men's good, and extenuate their evil. And so they nourish their disease, and hug the viper that is gnawing at their bowels.

*Lastly*, There may be a judicial stroke in it. They will not entertain the discoveries which God makes them; and they shutting their eyes, the Lord strikes them blind.

But let us specially notice what God has a special eye upon.

*Secondly*, God is specially displeased with our having any other god.

1. He is displeased with gross idolatry. He shews his special wrath in this life against idolaters, as against the Israelites for worshipping the golden calf; and against the ten tribes, for their idolatry at Dan and Bethel. So old Babylon was, and new Babylon will be destroyed. All idolaters will be punished in the other life, Rev. xxi. 8.

Let us then shew our displeasure against, and resolve in the Lord's strength, to oppose the spreading of idolatry, chusing rather to suffer than sin.

2. He is displeased with the idols which men set up in their hearts. He shews his displeasure several ways.

(1.) Sometimes the Lord, in the fury of his jealousy, shovels the idol out of the way, as he did, in the case of Micah's idol, Judg. xviii. 24.

(2.) Sometimes he reduces the man to a necessity of parting either with his idol or his profession.

(3.) Oft-times the Lord makes the idol men's plague and punishment.

(4.) *Lastly*, Oft-times there is a rub by a torrent of temptation, that brings forth the idol in its own colours; as in the case of Judas' covetousness, and Demas's love of the world.

Let us therefore cast away our idols, and let nothing keep God's room in our hearts, especially in such a day when God is rising up to plead against us.

From the whole, ye may see that the commandment is exceeding broad. Be humbled under the sense of your guilt

in the breach of this command. And see what great need ye have to reform; and what need ye stand in of the blood of Christ for removing your guilt, and of his Spirit for cleansing your hearts, and subduing your iniquities.



#### OF THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 4, 5, 6.—*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing, that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

**T**HE second command comes now to be explained; and this is it, though the Papists will not allow it to be so: And it is so plain against them, that they leave it out of their catechisms and books of devotion which they put into the people's hands, joining the reason of it, *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, &c.* unto the first command; and so they count the third the second, the fourth the third, &c. and split the tenth into two (to make up the number), though the apostle expresses it in one word, 'Thou shalt not covet.' And indeed they have reason to hide it; for if they should let it come to the light, it would open the mystery of their iniquity among their blinded people, and spoil the most part of their devotions, whereof idols and images have the largest share.

As the first command fixeth the object of worship, so this fixes the means and ways of worship. The scope of it is to bind us to the external worship of God, and that in the way that he himself has instituted, and that we may be spiritual in that his worship. We may take it up in two things.

1. The command itself. 2. The reasons annexed.

The command itself we have, ver. 4. and part of ver. 5. I shall first consider the command.

The command is proposed negatively; and two things are here forbidden expressly.

*First*, The making of images for religious use and service, Lev. xxvi. 1. And that it is thus meant, and not of civil or political images, is plain from this, that it is a command of the first table, and so relates to divine worship. And our God is very particular in this point.

1. Graven images are forbidden particularly, that is, images cut or carved in wood, stone, or the like, called statues. These are particularly expressed, not only because they were the chief among idolaters, but because they do so lively represent men, beasts, &c. in all their parts and members, that nothing seems to be wanting in them but life; and so people are most ready to be deceived by them. But that we may see it is not these only that are abominable to our God.

2. Every similitude whatsoever for religious use and service is forbidden, whether it be done by casting in a mould, painting, weaving, or made any way whatsoever, though it be merely by the imagination, and not by the hand; for the words are universal, *any likeness*. How particular is this command in things themselves, whereof idolaters would have the images.

1st, No graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, must be made for religious worship. By the heavens above, is meant the air, and all to the starry heavens, and the seat of the blessed. In the visible heavens are the birds, sun, moon, and stars. No likeness of these is to be made; and therefore, to paint the Holy Spirit as a dove is idolatrous. In the seat of the blessed are God himself, angels, and saints, i. e. the spirits of just men made perfect, all invisible; so that it is impiety, yea, and madness, to frame images of them.

2dly, No graven image or likeness of any thing that is in the earth beneath is to be made for religious service, whether they be on the surface, or in the bowels of the earth. Now, in the earth are men, beasts, trees, plants, the dead bodies of men, &c. No likeness of these is to be made for religious worship.

3dly, No graven image, or likeness of any thing that is in the water under the earth, is to be made. Now, these are



fishes whatsoever the rivers and seas do produce. But no likeness of these is to be made for religious service.

But why so particular? This is deservedly inquired, when the first command, and most of the rest, are in so very few words. *Ans.* 1. Because the worship of God commanded here is not so much natural as in the first command, but instituted; and so nature's light can be of less service than in the first: for though the light of nature teacheth that God is to be worshipped, it cannot tell us how he will be worshipped, or in what particular way.

2. Because there is a special proneness in the nature of man to corrupt the worship and ordinances of God. Of old the worship of God was corrupted with vile idolatries and superstitions all the world over, but among the Jews, and frequently among them too. Ye will often read of the Jews falling in with the worship of the nations; but of any nation falling in with theirs, never, Jer. ii. 11. And so is it at this day among the Papists, yea, and other churches, as the church of England, and the Greek churches; and there are few Protestant churches, where these ordinances are not changed in greater or lesser measure.

3. There is a peculiar bias in corrupt nature to idolatry. It is natural for men to desire to see what they worship, Rom. i. 23. Exod. xxxii. 1. and to have a pompous worship. There is a natural weakness in the corrupt minds of men, whereby they are easily impressed by idols and images for religious service, ready to fancy something of divinity in them.

4. There is a peculiar hellish zeal that accompanies idolatry, to multiply gods, and to be most keen in the worship of them; like as it is seen in corporal adultery in those who have once prostituted their honour, Jer. l. 38. If you ask, what can put Papists, being men and not devils, on those horrid practices, of which we spake on the fast-day\*?

\* This part of the subject was delivered Feb. 21. and the discourse here referred to was preached on occasion of a congregation fast, on the 17th, 1714, being the last year of Queen Anne's reign. It is well known that plots were then carrying on by Papists, Jacobites, and malignants, not without countenance from the then Tory ministry, to bring a Popish Pretender to the throne, on the demise of that much-abused Princess, in place of the late King George I. upon whom the crown had been entailed by Act of Parliament, as the nearest Protestant heir; that great

I answer, Their idolatrous religion inspires them with that hellish fury, 1 Kings xviii. 28. Psal. cvi. 36, 37, 38. So does it on multiplying of them; for this particularity shews that almost from every part of the universe the heathens fetched their idols. And as the heathens had, so the Papists have, their idols and images of things in heaven, of God, angels, saints; and want not their queen of heaven, as well as the Pagans had. The earth furnishes them with an image of the cross, and with reliques and images of the dead. Remarkable is that which the author of the apocryphal book of Wisdom, which to the Papists is canonical scripture, chap. xiv. 15. gives as the original of idolatry, to wit, That a father, in bitterness for his son's death, made an image of his

numbers of trafficking priests and Jesuits flocked into this kingdom; that Popish meetings were held more openly than formerly; that Presbyterian ministers were insulted in several places, and threatenings of vengeance uttered to be inflicted on firm and staunch Protestants. At this dangerous season, Mr BOSTON, with that freedom and boldness that became a true patriot and an ambassador of the King of kings, was not silent, but faithfully testified against the abominations and cruelties of Papists, and the madness and extravagance of Jacobites and malignants, in the aforementioned discourse; and others preached in those perilous times.

As the discourse referred to was seasonable at that time, so it appears to be equally so at this day, when Popery is evidently on the increase in many places of this kingdom, Edinburgh not excepted, wherein there are said to be three numerous Popish meetings, and endeavours are used, by writings and speeches, to represent Popery in a light quite different from what it really is, thereby to beguile unwary and unstable souls; and not only Papists, but many infatuated and pretended Protestants, not Episcopalians only, but some who pretend to be Presbyterians, are as hearty and warm in the cause of a Popish pretender, as they were in any former period, and who, if their power were equal to their wishes and designs, would soon involve the nation in blood, and all the horrors of a civil war. These considerations have determined the preparer of this work for the Press to give the discourse entire, as it may be useful, through the divine blessing, for preserving people from the abominations of Popery, and the snares of Jacobites and malignants, those declared enemies to the religion and laws of their country, who, alas! are still very numerous amongst us, notwithstanding the Lord has signally testified his displeasure of their unhappy cause, on two former occasions, which will be ever remembered with gratitude by all true Protestants, and hearty friends to the illustrious house of Hanover, which God, in mercy to these kingdoms, has raised and maintained on the throne, and made the guardians of our religion, laws, and liberties. And it will be the hearty prayer of all who fear God, and have a just sense of the invaluable liberties we enjoy under our happy constitution, *O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the*

dead son, and first honoured him as a dead man, at length as a god, &c. And as the Pagans had their gods to be applied to by persons of several callings, countries, diseases, &c. so

*wicked*, particularly the Antichristian beast, and his tool, a Popish Pretender and his abettors.

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THE CHURCH'S PRAYER AGAINST THE ANTICHRISTIAN BEAST,  
AND HER OTHER ENEMIES, EXPLAINED AND ENFORCED.

[A sermon preached on a congregation fast-day at Ettrick, February 17, 1714.]

PSAL. lxxiv. 19.—*O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked.*

**T**HIS text represents to us the case of Britain and Ireland at this day (which like Rebekah have two parties struggling within them,) and thereupon an application made to the Lord about it. In the words considering,

1. The struggling parties : these are Zion and Babylon ; which never could, and never will agree. The Chaldean Babylon and the Jewish Zion are the parties here immediately pointed at : for it is plain, that this psalm was composed on the lamentable occasion of the Babylonians over-running Judea, and destroying Jerusalem and the temple. The Christian Zion and the Antichristian Babylon are the parties now on the field, the former being both gone ; and so the text may be, without stretching, applied to them. The one party is,

(1.) The *turtle* ; i. e. the church. She is compared to the turtle-dove for her fidelity to God. The turtle is a creature of admired chastity, has but one mate, and cleaves closely to that, and will take no other. So the true church of God preserves her chastity, worshipping none but the true God. But it is a bird that often becomes a prey, as being harmless and weak. Only it is pleaded on her behalf, that she is *God's turtle*. On the other hand is,

(2.) The *multitude*. This is the Babylonians, ver. 7. An idolatrous cruel people, who of old were so heavy on the church of God. But among the multitude were others, nearer neighbours to the Jews, particularly the Edomites, who, joining with the Babylonian army, were like firebrands among them, to spur them on to do mischief, Obed. 11. Psal. cxxxvii. 7. This is the case of this church with Papists, the brats of Babylon, with whom join our malignants ; not considering, that after they have helped Babylon to destroy us, they will fall on them next : as Edom



the Papists are well nigh even with them in that. The Pagans had their gods for the seamen, shepherds, husbandmen, &c; so the Papists have St. Nicholas for the seamen, St Wendolin for the shepherd, St John Baptist for the husband-

was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar some time after the destruction of Jerusalem.

The word rendered *multitude*, in Hebrew signifies *the wild beast*, that lives upon other beasts; such as lions, wolves, &c; and so it may be read. And so it points at two qualities of Babylonian enemies. (1.) Their idolatry, being designed a wild beast, in opposition to the chaste turtle. Such are our new, as the old Babylonians were. They are no more the spouse of Christ, but the great whore, that is mad on idols, and multitudes of them; and cannot be at ease with those that will not drink of the wine of their fornication. (2.) Their horrid cruelty; for having divested God of his divine glory, and given it to others, they are divested themselves of humanity, and rage like wild beasts, when they can get their prey, devouring their fellow-creatures.

2. The party holding the balance betwixt the struggling parties; that is, God himself, to whom application is here made, Babylon has not all at will; Zion's God has the balance of power in his own hand, and can cast the scales what way he pleaseth, and give up or preserve the turtle as he sees meet.

3. The address made to the great Arbitrator on the turtle's behalf, which is our work this day, *O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the wild beast*. Do not give up the turtle; she will find no mercy from the multitude, the wild beast. They are not content with the mischief they have done to the turtle; nothing less will satisfy them than her life, her soul. The wild beast is gaping for her, not to pluck off her feathers, and send her away wounded, but to swallow her up quite, to destroy her root and branch; for behold the plot, ver. 8, *Let us destroy them together*. But, Lord, do not give her up to them. It is a most fervent address, intimated by two words in one in Hebrew. We may take up the import of the words in four points.

I. The church may be in hazard of falling a prey to her enemies, as a poor turtle to be swallowed up by a devouring beast. The church's lot has been in all ages like Paul's, to "fight with wild beasts;" and she may well say, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us," Psal. cxxiv. 1, 2, 3. God's enemies, seeing they are not good men, the scripture accounts them beasts. Christ was attacked by bulls and lions, Psal. xxii, 12, 13; for when men turn persecutors, they set up themselves against the Deity, and withal lay aside all humanity. There are five beasts which God's turtle has been specially in hazard to be swallowed up by.

1. The Egyptian beast, 'the great dragon,' Ezek. xxix. 3. This was a cruel beast, that made the Lord's people groan long under the greatest bondage. A bloody beast; see the bloody edict, Exod. i. 16. 'When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women,' said

man, St Magdalene for the whore, as the Pagans had Flora. The family and country gods are a prodigious number, St Andrew for Scotland, St George for England, St Patrick for Ireland, St Denys for France, St James for Spain, &c. And

Pharaoh to the midwives, 'and set them upon the stools; if it be a son then ye shall kill him.' It had near swallowed them up, *Exod. xv. 9.* 'The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.' See how the turtle groans to the Lord against this beast, *Psal. lxxviii. 30.* 'Rebuke the company of spearmen,' *Heb.* 'the beast of the reeds.' And the people of God comfort themselves under their danger in the text, by the end of the Egyptian beast, *Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14.* 'Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragon in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meet to the people inhabiting the wilderness.'

2. The Babylonian beast, the lion, *Dan. vii. 4. Jer. xlix. 19.* Dreadful was the havock this beast made on them; it burnt the temple and the synagogues, filled the land with blood, spared neither men, women, nor children. See the whole book of Lamentations. And the text lets you see how they were well nigh being swallowed up by him. Yet God broke out the teeth of that fierce lion.

3. The Persian beast, the bear, a bloody beast, *Dan. vii. 5.* This, though it lay quiet for a while, yet hindered the building of the temple and the city a long time, and kept the church sore at under. But under this beast a bloody massacre was set on foot, *Esth. iii.*

The conspirators have their frequent meetings, *ver. vii.* the court is friendly to them, and the bloody day is set, *ver. 12, 13.* and all because Mordecai would not bow to Haman an Amalekite, one of those against whom the Lord had sworn he would have war for ever. How near was the church then to be swallowed up? but God broke the plot, and ruined that beast too.

4 The Grecian beast, the leopard, *Dan. vii. 6.* This beast had almost swallowed up the church under Antiochus Epiphanes, who raised a most dreadful persecution against the Jews, polluted the temple, forbade the public worship of God, and set up in the temple the image of the heathen Jupiter, and cruelly murdered many that would not comply with idolatry, *Dan. xi. 31.—34.* Yet they survived that beast.

5. The Roman beast, which is nameless, *Dan. vii. 7.* The scripture speaks of two Roman beasts, that were both heavy to the church.

1<sup>st</sup>, The great red dragon, *Rev. xii. 3*; that is, the Roman empire, headed by the Pagan emperors, whom the devil stirred up to persecute the church for the first three hundred years. Horrible was the havock of Christians made under ten persecuting Pagan emperors. So that it is reckoned there were as many Christians slain under them, as that, if ye would suppose them at this butchering work for one year, there would be five thousand martyrs for every day of that year.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The beast with the name of blasphemy, *Rev. xiii. 1*; that is, the Roman Christian, or rather Antichristian Empire, headed by the Pope, the

that god-making power that is in the Pope and his Cardinals to canonize any deceased person they think worthy, may fill the world with them. Gods they have almost for every disease. What wonder then that the command is so particular?

Popish kingdom, whereof the Pope is the head. All the rest are gone. This is the only remaining beast that is threatening, at this day, the swallowing up of the church in these lands. But this beast, the Antichristian kingdom, is the common sink of all the evil qualities of the other beasts, Rev. xiii. 2. and has outdone them all. So that eight hundred thousand are reckoned to have lost their lives in thirty years under this beast, which has lasted many hundreds of years. Yet multitudes in Britain and Ireland at this day are doing what they can to run us into the paw of this bear, the mouth of this lion and dragon. But let us cry, *O deliver not thy turtle-dove unto this beast.* We may see that we are in fearful danger of it. The symptoms of it are,

(1.) The frightful appearance that Papists and Popery are making now in these lands. It is known that great numbers of Papists are come, and are still coming from abroad: that they are drawing together in an unusual manner; that they are arming themselves, no doubt for some bloody design. The locusts spoke of Rev. ix. 3. are swarming in the land, well known in the northern parts; and no doubt through all corners they are trafficking, though in disguise. They have dreadful success, perverting many, and mass is said publicly and avowedly in several parts. So that these twenty-five years, since King James was on the throne, they have never so lifted up their heads as now.

(2.) The just fears there are of the Pretender's getting into the throne, a Papist bred up in the maxims of Popery and French government, from whom nothing can be more expected than the ruin of the Protestant religion. To this Papists and malignant Jacobites are bending their united endeavours, and have so far ripened their accursed project, that they are very confident of success.

(3.) The formidable power of France, from whence our enemies have their great encouragement. That cruel tyrant is by the late peace now at more leisure to enslave us, and landing an army for setting the Pretender on the throne, to be a tool, (in his hand) to ruin our liberties and our holy religion, as he has done at home with his own.

(4.) Many vile men are exalted to places of power and trust, enemies to the Protestant succession, keen for the Popish Pretender, though they have abjured him, for no greater end than that they might thereby get into places to do him service, and further his interest. What wonder then that the wicked walk on every side, and that God's turtle be in hazard of being swallowed up by the Antichristian beast?

II. God may justly give up a sinful church and a sinful people into the power of the multitude of this beast. They have nothing to plead but free mercy, why they should not be so given up *O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the wild beast.* What has Britain and Ireland, what has Scotland to plead this day, why they should not be delivered into the power of the wild beast that is gaping to suck their blood, and devour us? We may see we deserve it, if we consider,



*Lastly*, Because the Lord has (so to speak) a particular zeal for his own worship, and against idolatry. Thus he pursues them out of all their starting-holes. He will not allow them an image of any thing in the heaven above, of any

1. The sins of the late times. These nations were some time in a thriving condition, having proclaimed war against the beast, and married themselves to the Lord in a solemn covenant for reformation, to cast off and out all Antichristian corruption in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, life and manners, to banish the false prophet and the unclean spirit out of them. But behold, by a heaven-daring wickedness, the same generation in the three kingdoms publicly renounce and break that covenant, and for the greater solemnity it is burnt, and of late the ashes of it were gathered by authority, and thrown into the river of the sinful union between Scotland and England. Is it any wonder that God is now rising up to pursue for the penalty, according to that threatening, Lev. xxvi. 25. "I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant?" This is the head of God's controversy with the nations; this was the inlet to other abominations: for that being done, the nations run back towards Antichrist again. Scotland takes back the horns of the beast. England and Ireland the horns and the attire of the whore. Profaneness breaks in like a flood; the faithful are persecuted, oppressed, and murdered; and most part of all ranks make fearful apostasy and defection from the ways of truth.

2. The sins of the present times. We have entered ourselves heirs to the guilt of former times, by not mourning over the same by a woful slackness in not pursuing of reformation, and heartlessness and faintness in the cause of God. We have gone far to betray the covenanted work of reformation; and enemies want not ground to say, that they have bought the truth of many in the generation, who are not yet convinced they have sold it. If we look to,

(1.) A great man in our land, we will see unordinarily monstrous wickedness, especially, though not only among the nobility and gentry. Atheism and Deism, I believe have made greater advances in our day, than ever they did since the Christian religion was known in the world. All revealed religion and the scriptures are ridiculed; and they that have any sense of religion on their spirits, are reckoned to have been foundered in their education. Hence loose reins are given to all manner of profaneness and debauchery. Whoredom and adultery, and filthiness not to be named, have made unordinary advances, especially since the union was set on foot; for having drank of the cup of English filthiness, they have been made mad. If for these things God have not a sacrifice of the best blood in Scotland and England, it will be strange.

(2.) To the body of the land, we will find them either profane drunkards, swearers, Sabbath-breakers, dishonest, or ignorant, carnal worldlings that mind nothing but the world, living in a woful neglect of all religion, from whose heart their own ease and that of the church lies far off, slighting the precious offers of Christ, and not bettered by all the means of grace which they have been long living under.

(3.) To professors, we will see the provocation of sons and daughters

thing under heaven, or in the earth, or of any thing in the waters under the earth. Where then shall they have them but from hell, where the devil and damned spirits are?

*Secondly*, The worshipping of them is forbidden.

increased to heaven. How have we left our first love ! where is the tenderness that sometimes have seen ? A general deadness, formality, and lukewarmness has seized them. Carnality and worldly mindedness has ate out the life of religion. A light, vain and frothy spirit has got in among them, pride and self-conceit prevail, ordinances are slighted, sermons and sacraments treated as things common and unclean, and a fiery divisive spirit, more frightened at the sins of others than their own, has dishonoured God and broken us.

(4.) Look where we will, guilt stares us in the face. We have all sinned. God has a controversy with magistrates, ministers, and people ; for we have all gone back from the Lord, been unthankful for, and have miserably misimproved our privileges, and opportunities of advancing the kingdom of Christ within us and without us. Let us then conclude, that God may justly deliver us up unto the multitude, the Antichristian beast.

III. If God give up his turtle unto the wild beast, the multitude of her enemies, it will be a dreadful upgiving. When God let his people fall into the hands of the old Babylonian beast, terrible was their case. And now the Antichristian beast, to which the malignant party lend a helping hand, is going to devour us ; and if God give us up into their hand, it will be a dreadful upgiving. A Popish Pretender mounting the throne, a French army in our country, together with an army of British Papists and malignants, must needs be a thought of horror to us. It will be a dreadful upgiving. For then,

1. Religion is ruined. The Babylonian beast will make sad work of our holy religion, as Psal lxxii. 4,—8. King James was not well warm on the throne, till by his absolute power free liberty was given to Popish idolatry through the nations. But what can we expect in the case before us, but the overturning at first dash all that we have had by the Revolution, yea, and the extirpation of the northern heresy, as they call it ; We must in that case lay our account with the silencing of ministers, silent Sabbaths, and closed church-doors, till they be opened again for the mass, or at least for the English service which yet will be but an expedient for a time to prepare us for Popery.

2. Liberty and property is ruined. We must lay our account with French government. Our all must be at the disposal of our arbitrary prince, whose will must be our law, to use us, and what is ours, according to his pleasure. We must no longer look for the liberty of free-born subjects, but must be content to be slaves : and our laws may be burnt, for all law then must be locked up in the breast of the prince. And the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, that enslaving notion, must be quietly learned.

3. Ourselves and our families are ruined in our souls or bodies, or both. We must lay our account to feel the teeth of the Babylonian beast, to swim in blood to glut the scarlet-coloured whore, already drunk with the blood of the saints. The Papists are a bloody generation, and we may

1. The very bowing to them is forbidden, whether it be the bowing of the whole body, bowing the knee, or bowing the head, and much more prostrating ourselves before them, and so consequently uncovering of the head. Men may

expect to see our land filled with blood and desolation, if the Lord deliver us into the hand of the wild beast. Let us look about us, and take notice of their cruelties exercised upon the churches of Christ, to awaken us to a sense of our danger from that bloody generation.

In the valley of Piedmont they raised a most barbarous persecution against the church, where simple death would have been a great kindness. But some were flayed alive, and some were buried alive; the mouths of some were filled with gun-powder, and then fired. They beat out the brains of some, then fried and eat them. They ript up women, fixed them on spits, roasted them, and ate their breasts. Maids were carried by the foldiers with spits stuck up through them. Infants were taken out of their cradles, and torn to pieces. I am not speaking, my brethren, of devils, but of Papists.

In Calabria they drave them out of their houses to the woods and mountains. The aged and children that could not flee, they murdered by the way, pursuing the rest like wild beasts. Those that could recover the mountains, being on the top of rocks, besought their enemies to let them but out of the country, and they would leave them their towns and estates. But the barbarian Papists would not hearken, but still cried, Kill, kill. Eighty had their throats cut, and then they were quartered, and set upon stakes all along the way for the space of thirty miles.

In the valley of Loyse all the inhabitants, being about thirty thousand, fled, upon the approach of the Papists, to the cliffs and caves of the rocks and mountains, whether their enemies pursued them, and set on fire great quantities of wood at the mouth of the caves; some were forced to leap out, and were broken to pieces falling over the precipice; the rest were stifled, among whom were found four hundred infants.

In the massacre of Ireland there perished above 150,000, some say 154,000 Protestants, in a few months, men, women, and children. Some they buried alive, with their heads above the ground. Others they ripped up, tied the end of their guts to trees, and forced them round about till their guts were so drawn out of their bodies. Infants were held up on their swords and daggers, to sprawl there. Children were forced to murder their parents, women to hang their own husbands, and mothers to drown their own children; and when they had so far satisfied the bloody beasts, they were murdered themselves. The posterity of these murderers still subsist, and may be got over, if an occasion offer here.

But if ye will believe our Jacobites, the French are a more civil sort of Papists. O horrible civility? Are not the galleys, a civil sort of business, the breaking on the wheel, and the dragooning, all used by this present tyrant? Can we reflect without horror on their blowing up men and women with bellows till they be ready to burst, pulling off the nails of fingers and toes, sticking them with pins from head to foot, &c. beating twelve drums about the beds of the sick, &c. till they should change their religion? It is not many years since a company of these poor people being



think it a small thing to use such a gesture before them, if they do not pray to them, &c. but our jealous God forbids, the lowest degree of religious worship to them, and for civil worship they are not capable of it, as Gen. xxiii. 7.

met in a barn, the barn was beset by soldiers, and set on fire; and when any put out a hand to escape, the soldiers were ready to cut it off, till they were consumed.

In the Netherlands 18,000 were dispatched. The laws of the inquisition there were, that if they recanted, women were to be buried alive, and men killed with the sword. If they would not recant, they were to be burnt. So that denying the faith will not always do with them. So in Ireland they murdered them after they had got them to abjure.

What should I speak of their cruelties? Death is terrible: but a simple death will not satisfy them, but barbarous cruelty, yea, and villainies worse than death, as binding husbands and fathers to bed posts till they abused their wives and daughters before them, which was done in the dragging under this present tyrant in France, and in the massacre in Ireland. Now upon all this let me notice a fourfold infatuation.

1. Are not those infatuated, who being Protestants are for bringing a Popish Pretender to the throne, or are indifferent about it? Will the laws bind him, and secure us? But had not the Protestants in France such a security, when thirty thousand of them were massacred in thirty days; and the Protestants in Ireland too. Will we bind him with terms? Had not the Suffolk men Queen Mary's promise ere she came to the throne? Had not the church of Scotland King Charles II. by solemn oath of the covenant? Will we flatter ourselves with hopes of his becoming Protestant? Is it not known that a little before his pretended father came to the crown, some were put to trouble for saying he was a Papist? Look to the flames of martyrs in England in Queen Mary's days, in whose reign, and her father's eight thousand were put to death. Let us call to mind the cruelty of our own Queen Mary, and with what satisfaction she beheld from the castle of Edinburgh the dead bodies of her Protestant subjects laid out by the French on the walls of Leith.

2. Is not that aversion to the Hanover succession an infatuation, while no other way under heaven appears for our preservation, and that of the Protestant religion? They will tell you, What is Hanover better than a Papist? and what is the difference betwixt consubstantiation and transubstantiation? Papist and Jacobites have spread this. But Protestants ought to honour that family, seeing it was but the present Duchess-dowager's father and mother that lost the kingdom of Bohemia for the Protestant religion, with whose loss of that kingdom the Protestant religion was lost there, and for them many a prayer was long put up by the church of Scotland in our forefathers days. And should we grudge God's giving that family a kingdom, that lost one for his cause? As for the difference betwixt consubstantiation and transubstantiation, there is one, that the Lutherans do not worship the sacrament. And seeing it was an error in which the Lord left Luther himself, the great instrument of the Reformation, it becomes men to be more modest, than to reckon one no better than a Papist on that head.

2. The serving of them. This implies whatsoever service the true God required of his worshippers, or the Pagans gave to their idols. So the serving them lies in these things, setting them up on high, carrying them in processions,

3. Are not our present divisions an infatuation? Must Presbyterians be worrying one another, while the common enemy is at our doors, that will make no difference betwixt us? Must we be breaking with one another, while we are in such hazard to be all broken together? Are we not all together weak enough for our enemies! Must one party stand at a side till they have devoured another? Herod and Pontius Pilate are become friends. The mass and the English service are contributing joint endeavours to ruin the church of Scotland. Papists and malignants agree together against us; and some of them will tell you, that they would rather be Papists than Presbyterians. Some of them acknowledge the church of Rome a true church, but not the church of Scotland. They will have us to be no ministers, because we want Episcopal ordination, and you no Christians, because ye are unbaptised in their account, as not being baptised by ministers having such ordination. And yet we must be breaking more and more among ourselves? Learn from the beasts in the ark to lay by your antipathies. They were but in hazard of drowning in a sea of water, but we in a sea of blood. I am not bidding you quit or deny any truth for peace; only do not think that it will absolve you from what is required in the sixth commandment, that ye cannot get others racked your length, who agree with you in the main.

4. Is not our present security an infatuation? Is it not time now for sleepers to awake? Is it not time now to be stirring ourselves in our several stations for the preservation of religion, and the getting it felt in power in our own hearts? For a bare profession will expose you.

IV. Unless the Lord give up his turtle to the multitude, all their power and force shall not be able to hurt her. However we are beset with enemies this day, our God must give us up ere they can reach us. This is comfortable. Therefore let me say,

1. Let us make up our peace with Heaven: for if God be for us, who shall be against us? O that the nations were now so wise as to repent and reform, and renew their covenant with God. We would then have ground to hope, that the Lord would not give them up. But if this cannot be had, be ye so wise, each of you for yourselves, as to lay hold on the covenant and Mediator of peace, repent and reform; and let there be no standing controversy betwixt God and you, come what will.

2. Let us pray much for the church of God. In the year 1588, when the Spanish Armado set off to sink England, to ruin the Protestant religion in Britain, great was the consternation on the spirits of Protestants then; but there were wrestlers then in Scotland and England; and God armed the winds and waves against them, and made that proud monarch see that his Armado was not invincible. The outpouring of the Spirit of prayer would do more this day against our enemies than all the power of France is able to do for them.

3. *Lastly*, Let us encourage ourselves in the Lord: prepare for the worst, yet hope that God will plead the cause that is his own. We have

erecting temples, chapels, altars to them, making vows to them, praying to them, offering incense to them, and dedicating days to them. All which the Papists do to their idols.

The Papists will tell you, they do not worship them absolutely, but relatively; not ultimately, but mediately; whereby they beguile unstable souls. But the command strikes through all these fig-leaf covers, and says absolutely we must not worship them, nor give them the lowest degree of worship: *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.—Thou shalt not bow unto them, nor serve them.*

But we have not yet the full meaning of the negative part of this command. Does it only forbid the making and worshipping of images? No. Remember the rule, That where one sort of sin is expressed in a command, all others of that kind are included. When in the seventh command adultery is forbidden, all manner of uncleanness is forbidden, though one of the grossest sort only is named. So here, when the corrupting of the worship of God by images is forbidden, all other corruptions whatsoever of God's worship are included.

The matter of this command is the worship of God and his ordinances; and it says to every man, Thou shalt not make any thing whereby thou wilt worship God. And as the seventh command meets him that defiles his neighbour's wife, saying, Thou shalt not commit adultery; so this meets the church of Rome, and says, Thou shalt not make any graven image, &c. But as the seventh says also to the fornicator, Thou shalt not commit uncleanness; so this says also to the church of England, thou shalt not make crossing in baptism, kneeling, bowing to the altar, festival days, &c. —And to every sort of people, and to every particular person, it says, thou shalt not meddle to make any thing of divine worship and ordinances out of thy own head.

All holy ordinances and parts of worship, God has reserved to himself the making of them for us, saying, with respect to these, Thou shalt not make them to thyself. Men are

a good cause, and a good God to look to, who keeps the balance in his own hand. And we have the sworn enemy of Christ, even Antichrist, to oppose; and better die in Christ's cause than live on Antichrist's side; for the day is hastening on, when the Roman beast and its adherents shall get blood to drink for the blood they have shed, Rev. xix, 17, 18, 19, 20.



said, in scripture, to make a thing to themselves, when they make it out of their own head, without the word of God for it. But when they make any thing according to God's word, God is said to do it, Matth. xix. 6. If there be not then a divine law for what is brought into the worship and ordinances of God, it is an idol of men's making, a device of their own. And so Popery, Prelacy, ceremonies, and whatsoever is without the word, brought in God's matters, is overturned at once by his word, Thou shalt not make, be thou Pope, King, Parliament, minister, private person, synod or council. So ye see it is not only the making of images, but the worshipping and serving them, that is forbidden.

Next, by the same rule, whereas this command forbids not only the making of images, but bowing to them, and serving them, though they be made by others, that is not all that is included in that. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them. But the meaning of it further is, Whatever any make without the word, in the matter of God's worship and ordinances, thou shalt not comply with it, approve of it, or use it. So that to thee they must be as if they were not made at all, make them who will, under whatever pretence, whether of decency or strictness, seeing God has not made them. To the law and to the testimony, be of what party they will, if they speak not according to this word, fear them not to comply with them in what they advance in God's matters, that is not according thereto. So much for the negative part of this command.

The positive part of it is implied, according to the rule, That every negative implies an affirmative part. It consists in these two things.

1. Thou shalt worship the Lord, and him shalt shou serve; worship him with external worship. This is implied in that, *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.* This says, But thou shalt bow down to me, and serve me. Even as due benevolence betwixt married persons is implied in that, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Internal worship is the worship required in the first, external in the second command. There is a generation that do not worship images, but they lie fair for it, if it were once come in fashion; it is those that do not worship God, they do not bow down to

him, nor serve him. They say, God looks to the heart, and they hope and trust in him, and give their hearts to him, though they do not go about the outward worship as some others do, but their hearts are as true with God as theirs for all that. These, I say, lie fair for worshipping images; for if the devil were come, their house is empty, swept, and garnished. They may worship idols, for they do not worship God in secret, or in their families. If the book-prayers of England, and the idolatrous prayers of Rome, were come to their hand, there is no other worship to be put out for them, for they have no other.

What they talk of their hearts towards God, therein they join with the Papists, who put the second command out of the number of the ten. For the worship of God which they slight on that pretence, is the very worship required in this command. Now, let us try whether ye that will hold with the worship of the heart, or this command that requires outward bodily worship too, has most reason on your side.

*1st*, Is not God the God of the whole man, the body as well as the soul? Christ has redeemed the body as well as the soul; the Spirit dwells in the bodies of his people as well as their souls. The whole man, soul and body, is taken into the covenant. The body shall be glorified in heaven as well as the soul, or burn in hell as well as the soul. Is it not highly reasonable, then, that we worship God with outward bodily worship, as well as with the inward worship of the heart?

*2dly*, God will not only be worshipped by us, but glorified beforemen, Matth. xvi. 24. But our inward worship cannot do that, for that is what none can know but God and our own souls. Therefore outward worship is necessary. If men will be accounted God's servants, why will they not take on his badge?

*3dly*, Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh in other cases, and why not in this? The apostle says grace in the hearts appears by the mouth to the honour of God, Rom. x. 10. And though outward worship may be performed where there is no inward in the heart, yet if the heart be a temple to God, the smoke will rise up from the altar, and appear without in outward worship.

*Lastly*, Outward worship is not only a sign of the inward, but it is a help and furtherance to it. Prayer is a blessed

mean to increase our love to God, sorrow for sin, faith, hope, and other parts of heart-worship. So, the partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, another part of external worship, in the profane neglect of which many live, is not only a mean appointed, whereby we publicly profess ourselves engaged to the Lord, but is the mean to strengthen faith, and confirm our union and communion with him.

2. Thou shalt fall in with and use the external worship and ordinances which God has appointed. This is implied in that, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.* They are made already, God has made them, and ye must use those that God has made, that worship, and those ordinances. And thus, by this command we are bound to all the parts of God's worship, and to all his ordinances appointed in his word. If we baulk any of them, it is at our peril. It is not enough to leave idolatrous or superstitious worship and ordinances, but we must inquire what are the Lord's statutes, that we may do them.

I come now to that question, 'What is required in the second commandment? The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.'

In handling this point, I shall shew,

I. What is that religious worship, and those ordinances, which God hath appointed in his word.

II. What is our duty with reference to those ordinances.

I. I shall shew what is that religious worship, and those ordinances which God hath appointed in his word. That God has appointed that religious worship, and those ordinances, whereby we are outwardly to glorify him, is evident from this, that God will be so honoured by us, yet has forbidden us to make any thing that way, consequently they are made by himself in his word. These ordinances appointed in the word are,

1. Prayer, whereby we tender to him the homage due from a creature to his Creator, acknowledging our dependence on him as the Author of all good. The parts of it are petition, confession, and thanksgiving. And that public in the assemblies, Acts ii. 42; private in lesser societies, particularly in families, Jer. x. ult; and secret, every one by



himself, Mat. vi. 6. none of them to jostle out another. In these we are tied to no form.

2. Praises in singing psalms, whereby we give him the praise due to him. And this is appointed, both publicly, Psal. cxlix. 1. and privately, Jam. v. 13. This is to be done in all simplicity becoming the gospel, singing them with grace in the heart, Col. iii. 16; not playing them on musical instruments, of which there is not one word in the New Testament.

3. Reading of God's word, and hearing it read, both publicly, Acts xv. 21. and privately, John v. 39; whereby we honour God, consulting his oracles.

4. The preaching of the word, and hearing it preached, 2 Tim. iv. 2. 2. Kings iv. 23. And consequently the ministry is an ordinance of God, Rom. x. 15. Eph. iv. 11, 12. and the maintenance thereof, 1 Cor. ix. 14. by an ordinance of God, though there should be no ordinance of the state for it.

5. Administration and receiving of the sacraments, to wit, baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Mat. xxviii. 19. and the Lord's supper, 1 Cor xi. 23, &c. both which are left us in much gospel-simplicity. By these we solemnly avouch ourselves to be the Lord's, and receive the seals of his covenant, getting our faith of covenant-blessings confirmed.

6. Fasting, or extraordinary prayer with fasting, when the Lord by his providence calls for it, as when tokens of his anger do in a special manner appear. And this is public, in the congregation, Joel ii. 12, 13. and private too, as in families, 1 Cor. vii. 5. and secret, Matth. vi. 17, 18. See Zech. xii. 12, 13, 14. The same is to be said of extraordinary prayer, with thanksgiving.

7. Church government and discipline. Christ has appointed a government in his church, and has not left it to men to dispose of it, Heb. iii. 5, 6. 1 Cor. xii. 28. He has appointed his officers, which are pastors and doctors. Eph. iv. 11. ruling elders and deacons, 1 Cor. xii. 28. And besides these the scripture knows no ordinary church-officers. The three first are, by his appointment, church-rulers. They have the power of discipline, Matth. xviii. 17, 18. to rebuke scandalous offenders publicly, 1 Tim. vi. 20. to excommunicate the contumacious, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. And a-

mongst these officers of the same kind there is a parity by divine appointment, excluding both Pope and Prelate, Matth. xx. 26. There is also a subordination of judicatories, Acts xv. which is the government we call Presbyterial.

8. Instructing and teaching in the ways of the Lord, not only by ministers, but by masters of families, who are to teach their families, Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vi. 6, 7.

9. *Lastly*, Spiritual conference, Mal. iii. 16. Deut. vi. 7. and swearing, of which we shall treat in the third commandment.

II. I shall shew what is our duty with reference to these ordinances. It is fourfold.

1. We must receive them in our principles and profession. We must carry them as the badge of our subjection to our God, Micah iv. 5.

2. We must observe them in our practice, Matth. xviii. 20. For what end do we receive these ordinances, if we make no conscience of the practice of them? We will be in that case as the servant that knew his master's will, but did it not. So here there is a number of duties laid on us by this command. It requires us also to pray, ministers to pray publicly and the people to join; masters of families to pray in their families, and the family to join with them; and each of us to pray in secret. It requires all of us to sing the Lord's praises, privately and publicly. It requires church officers to exercise church-discipline, and offenders to submit thereunto, &c. &c.

3. We must do our duty to keep them pure, that nothing of men's inventions be added to them, and that whatever others mix with them, we adhere to the purity of ordinances, 1 Cor. xi. 2.

4. We must do our duty to keep them entire, that nothing be taken from them, Deut. xii. ult. for both adding and paring in these matters are abominable to the Lord.

*Finally*, It requires us, in consequence of this, to disapprove, detest, and oppose, according to our several places and stations, all worship that is not appointed of God, whether superstitious or idolatrous, and, according to our several places and stations, to endeavour the removal of the same, Acts xvii. 16, 17. Deut. vii. 5.

I proceed to consider what is forbidden in the second commandment. *Ans.* 'The second commandment forbiddeth

the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.' The sum of the second commandment is, That we worship God according as he has appointed in his word, and no otherwise. Hence there are two ways in the general, whereby this command is broken, viz. by irreligion and false worship.

FIRST, Irreligion is the not shewing a due regard to, and not duly complying with the worship and ordinances appointed by God in his word, Job xv. 4. It is a sin against this command in defect, as false worship is in excess. It is a not worshipping of God with external worship and by means appointed, as false worship is worshipping in a way not appointed. And it is as much forbidden in this command, as to have no God at all is in the first. There are several sorts of that irreligion, all here forbidden.

1. The not receiving, but rejecting the worship and ordinances of God, Hos. viii. 12. This is the sin, (1.) Of atheists, who, as they have no reverence for God, seeing they deny him, do also reject his worship. (2.) of Quakers, who throw off almost the whole external worship and ordinances of God, under the pretence of worshipping him in spirit. (3.) Of all those who do not receive, but reject any one ordinance of God whatsoever, as some do singing of psalms, others the sacraments, others the government instituted by Christ, &c.

2. All neglect of God's worship and ordinances, in not observing them in their practice. The neglect of these, though men do not professedly reject them, is very offensive, Exod. iv. 24, 25. So in this command is forbidden,

1st, The neglect of prayer, Psal. xiv. 4. How can they read or hear this command without a check, who do not bow a knee to God? This command forbids,

(1.) The neglect of public prayer in the congregation; whereof people are guilty when they unnecessarily absent themselves from the public ordinances, or, through laziness or carelessness, the prayers are over ere they come; or unnecessarily go away and leave public prayers; or do not in their hearts join and go along with the speaker in them.

(2.) The neglect of family worship, and prayers particularly, Jer. x. ult. Christian families should be churches, wherein God should be worshipped. It is the sin of the whole family, especially of the heads thereof, when it is ne-



glected. I say the whole, because it must needs be offensive to God, that while his worship lies neglected in a family, there is none there willing to take it up, and supply the defect. Besides, there is a neglect of it, where it is performed, viz. when any members of the family neglect to join therein, but unnecessarily absent themselves, or being present do not join in their hearts with the speaker.

(3.) The neglect of secret prayer. It is a positive ordinance of God, Matth. vi. 6. and the neglect of it, as it will not readily be the sin of those exercised to godliness, Cant. vii. 11. so it is a sad sign of little desire of communion with God.

*2dly*, The neglect of singing the Lord's praises, whether in public or in private. There are some who sit mute like fishes in the congregation praising God, who are ready enough to rant in the congregation of drunkards. There are no psalms sung in their families, for they are strangers to spiritual mirth; but they can laugh and sing to express their carnal mirth.

*3dly*, The neglect of reading, and hearing the word read, in public, private, or secret. Has God commanded to search the scriptures, and will men be such neglecters of it? What irreligion is it thus to neglect the word of life, our Father's testament, the book of God that teaches the way to eternal happiness?

*4thly*, The neglect of preaching the word is the sin of ministers, 2 Tim. vi. 1, 2. This is to starve souls, instead of feeding them, which will make a dreadful account. So this command condemns, (1.) The practice of the lordly prelates, the least of whose work is preaching the gospel. They will needs have Timothy a bishop: with what face can they read, then, that solemn charge, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ;—preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season,' &c. who (as if they would give us the perfect reverse of John the Baptist's character) are found more in the palace than the pulpit? Matt. xi. 7, 8. (2.) Their devolving this work upon their curates and parsons, who often devolve it again upon their hirelings, Ezek. xlv. 8. (3.) Ministers having plurality of benefices and charges, whereby it is rendered impossible for them to feed them as is necessary unless they could be in several parishes at once. (4.) The non-residence of ministers,

whereby they are under the same incapacity. (5.) All negligence of ministers, whereby they lightly, and without weighty grounds, leave their flocks destitute of the preaching of the word, shorter or longer time.

*5thly*, The neglect of hearing of the word. People are thus guilty when they totally absent themselves from the public ordinances, Heb. x. 25. It is lamentable to think how God is dishonoured, and graceless people hardened, by the prevailing of this among us. Whatever religion men place in this, this command makes it irreligion. If we be in our duty to preach, people are out of their duty that neglect to hear. Thus are people also guilty, when without any necessity they do at any time absent themselves, and when they rove and wander, and do not attend to the word preached when present.

*6thly*, Ministers neglecting the administration of the sacraments. God has joined them together with the word in their commission, and therefore the neglect of any of them must be their sin. Christ has ordered the sacrament of his supper to be often celebrated, 1 Cor. xi. 26. though he has not determined how often. I know no church so guilty in this point as our own.

*7thly*, People's neglecting of the sacraments, to receive them. Thus people bring guilt on themselves, by slighting and neglecting the ordinance of baptism, Luke vii. 30. unduly delaying the baptism of their children; and also in slighting the sacrament of the Lord's supper, 2 Chron. xxx. 10. Is it not a strange thing how men get their consciences satisfied, while they neglect one opportunity after another, and live in the avowed neglect of an uncontroverted ordinance?

*8thly*, The neglect of the duty of fasting and prayer, when the Lord by his providence calls for it, whether public, or private, or secret. The neglect of public fasting and prayer is the sin of the church of Scotland at this day, seeing that our melancholy circumstances do evidently hold forth the call of providence thereto. And for family-fasts, how is that duty absolutely neglected in most families though there is no family but sometimes has a private call thereto, by some stroke threatened or lying on them, &c.? And how many are absolute strangers to secret personal fasting and prayer, though they want not calls thereto, either from their tempo-

ral or spiritual case? Matth. vii. 21. Thus may the church, families, and particular persons, be guilty in the neglect of thanksgiving for mercies.

*9thly*, The neglect of the exercise of church-discipline by church-judicatories, greater or lesser, in order to the purging of the church of scandalous members, Rev. ii. 14. This has been and is the sin of the church of Scotland, for which God may justly take his keys out of our hand. And now matters are come to that pass in most congregations, through the land, and has ever so been in this congregation since I knew it, that the vigorous exercise of discipline cannot be to edification\*, Gal. v. 12. the disease being turned too strong for the cure. May the Lord convince them powerfully, and check them effectually, that make it so!

*10thly*, The neglect of catechising and instructing the weak. Thus ministers are guilty when they are not at pains to catechise; and those who will not be at pains to wait on diets of examination, but shun it time after time, and will rather enjoy their ignorance than come to learn. So masters of families are guilty who are at no pains to instruct their wives, children, and servants, in the principles of religion; and such as neglect that opportunity of family-catechising. You want not good helps to this; why may ye not take a Catechism, such as Allein's &c. and ask the questions, and cause them to answer? It would be a good spending of the Sabbath, profitable to you and them too.

*Lastly*, The neglect of spiritual conference, when God puts an opportunity in our hands, especially on the Lord's day, when our talk in a special manner is required to be spiritual, and we have the advantage of speaking of the Lord's word which we have heard.

3. All curtailing and mincing of God's worship and ordinances, not keeping them entire, Deut. xii. ult. Men are guilty of this,

*1st*, When they reject any part of an ordinance instituted by Christ, and so leave it defective and lame, as the Papists

\* Upon the author's settlement in the parish of Ettrick, he found the people, with respect to church discipline, like bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. And he repeatedly complains in his Diary, that when church-censure was inflicted, or a rebuke administered, the delinquent immediately deserted his ministry, and joined the Old Dissenters, who at that time infested that and adjacent parishes.



in taking away the cup from the people, and the reading of the scriptures in private, &c.

2dly, When they receive some of Christ's ordinances, but not all. Thus,

(1.) Churches sin, as when they receive his doctrine and worship, but not the government and discipline appointed in his house. A sad defect in some churches from the reformation, where all Christ's ordinances could not get place; as if it had been left to men what to take and what to refuse of his institutions.

(2.) Families sin, mincing God's worship and ordinances. Some will sing and read, but not pray; some pray, but do not read and sing. Some will worship God in their families in the evening, but no morning-sacrifice can get room there for their throng. Some will do all, but neglect family catechising or instruction.

(3.) Particular persons sin. How men pick and chuse the institutions of God? Some wait on public ordinances, but make no conscience of private ordinances. Some, again, go about the private exercises of religion, but slight public ordinances. Some hear the word ordinarily, but they are habitual neglecters of the sacrament. Some pray in secret, but they pray not in their families; some in their families, but they have nothing to say to God, but what they can say before all their family; their family-prayers jumble out their secret prayers. Is this to keep God's worship and ordinances entire? How can men answer to God for this way of it?

(4.) Contempt of God's worship and ordinances, Matth. xxii. 5. Mal. i. 7. This is a crying sin of our day, that is like to fill up our cup to the brim, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. God has a special zeal for his own worship and ordinances, and therefore contempt of them must be dangerous to a degree. There are several sorts of this contempt of God's worship and ordinances, whereby men are guilty.

1st, Inward irreverence, when we come to or are at ordinances without due fear of God on our spirits, Eccl. v. 1; when we rush into the presence of God, in public, private, or secret duties, without that composure of spirit which an approach to the great God requires; when we do not prepare to meet with God in his ordinances, but stand not to touch the holy things of God with unholy, unsanctified hands.

*2dly*, Outward irreverence in holy ordinances, which is a plain contempt cast on them, Mal. i. 12, 13. Such are all foolish gestures in the time of divine worship, talking one with another, and much more laughing, whether in the church or the family. They are foolish, void of discretion, as well as the fear of God, that give up themselves to these things, and know neither God nor themselves. And those are also guilty of irreverence who sleep at ordinances, public or private, Acts xx. 9.

*3dly*, An open and avowed contempt of God's ordinances, Job. xxi. 14, 15. O what guilt is on the generation this way! They do not worship God in his ordinances, and they are not ashamed of it. They do not pray, and they will avow it. It is below them to bow a knee to God, especially in their families. They neglect the hearing of the word, and they glory in it. If we offer to touch them any manner of way, they will not come to the church again. They will loiter at home for months together, and think it no fault. They never communicate, and they are not ashamed of it. Contempt of ordinances has been a crying sin in Etrick these seven years, whatever it was before.

*4thly*, Contumacy, in not submitting to the discipline of Christ's house. People are not ashamed to sin and give scandal; they think not that below them; but they will commit their scandalous offences, get drunk, swear, revel, fight one with another, as if they would regard the laws neither of God nor man. But whatever be their scandals, if it be not fornication or adultery, they condemn and slight the discipline of Christ's house. With what contempt do many entertain church-government at this day!

*5thly*, Mocking of those that make conscience of God's worship, Is. xxviii. 22. Dreadful is that contempt where God's ordinances are made a jest of, and a man is treated like a fool, because he makes conscience of his duty towards God. Mock at preaching and praying as men will, the day will come when they will change their note.

*Lastly*, Simony, Acts viii. 18. It is a desire of buying or selling spiritual things, or things annexed to them, whether the bargain succeed or not; as buying or selling of baptism, &c. or an office appointed by Christ in his house. This prevails in corrupt times of the church, especially under patronages, is oft-times the sin of those that are getting into the

ministry, and of such as are concerned about them, when they take indirect methods, by themselves or friends, to get into charges by Simoniacal pactions, whether by gifts from the hand or from the tongue. And somewhat of this nature is the sin of scandalous curates, and of those that deal with them, who will for money marry people without testimonials, basely prostituting God's ordinance.

5. Hindering of God's worship and ordinances, Matt. xxiii. 13. Thus men are guilty of the breach of this command,

1st, In hindering God's public worship; which may be done many ways. As, (1.) By the magistrates laws or force against ministers preaching the word, and going about other duties of their station, Acts iv. 18. (2.) By sacrilege, taking away any thing that is necessary for the maintenance of God's worship, and which has been devoted for that end, as the maintenance of ministers and the like, Rom. ii. 22. (3.) By discouraging of ministers by calumnies, reproaches, and all hard usage, which may make them drive heavily in their work. (4.) Putting in and keeping in scandalous men in the ministry, 1 Sam. ii. 17. (5.) Men's keeping back those that are under them from attending the public worship. If any be so tied to their hirsels, that there is no way to relieve them on the Lord's day for many Sabbaths together, it is their sin that tie them so, and theirs that tie themselves so; though I am apt to believe it is but an excuse that some godless creatures make for themselves.

2dly, Hindering family-worship; which may be done many ways; as by a too eager and unseasonable pursuit of worldly business, till neither time nor strength is left for it; shuffling it off by this and the other thing that is to be done, and not watching the season for it; strife and contention in families, especially betwixt husband and wife, 1 Pet. iii. 7. any member of the family drawing back, and creating disorder.

3dly, Hindering secret worship; as not allowing people time to seek the Lord in secret, mocking or discouraging those that do so, &c.

To which we may add, our not doing what we can to further the worship of God in public, private or secret: for it is not enough that we do not hinder it, but what we do to further it? Heb. x. 24, 25; the not stirring up the lazy and careless, and putting them on to their duty.



*Lastly*, Opposing of God's worship and ordinances, public, private, or secret. This is more than to hinder them, Acts xiii. 44, 45. So are guilty, (1.) Persecutors, Acts iv. 18. (2.) Those that fond of their own inventions, set them to cast out, or hold out, God's true worship and ordinances out of a church: the sin of many at this day. (3.) Opposing of the settlement of parishes with gospel-ministers called according to the word, which, on prejudices and mistaken points of honour, has been and is the sin of many in the land. (4.) *Lastly*, All such as any way set themselves against God's worship, in public, in congregations, families, or secret. This will be found, whatever people think of it, a fighting against God, Acts v. 39.

SECONDLY, I come now to speak of false worship and ordinances, which is worship and ordinances not instituted or appointed by God himself. And this is expressly forbidden, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image*, &c. Deut. xii. ult. It is not only a sin not to worship God, and not to regard his ordinances, but to worship him in a way which he has not instituted, to bring in ordinances that bear not his stamp. Of this there are two sorts.

*First*, Idolatry. There is a sort of idolatry forbidden in the first command that respects the object of worship, when we worship any other than the true God. But the idolatry here forbidden respects the means of worship, when we make use of idols or images in worship, even though we intend ultimately the worshipping of the true God. And here is condemned,

1. All religious imagery; for of images and pictures for a civil or political use merely, the command is not to be understood; for the command being of the first table, plainly respects religion, Lev. xxvi. 1; and the art of cutting, carving, &c. is a gift of God, Exod. xxxi. 3,—5; and has had God's allowance for the exercise of it, 1 Kings vi. 29. Now, under this article of religious imagery is forbidden,

1<sup>st</sup>, The making any representation or image of God inwardly in our mind, all carnal imaginations of him, as to conceive of him like a reverend old man, &c. Acts xvii. 29. for God is the object of our understanding, not our imagination, being invisible. This is mental idolatry, which the best are in hazard of.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The making any outward representation of God by

any image. Remarkable is the connection of the first and second command: *Thou shalt have no other gods before me: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.* It is impossible to get any bodily likeness that can truly represent God as he is; and therefore men that, over the belly of reason and God's own will, will needs have representations of God, are fain to betake themselves to images of some corruptible thing, the very thing condemned in the heathens, Rom. i. 23. And therefore it is abominable imagery, and highly injurious to the great God, to represent him any manner of way. Such abominations are the representing of God by a sun shining with beams, with the name JEHOVAH in it or over it, as in several Bibles: the representing of the Father by an image of an old man, the Son by that of a lamb, or a young man; or the Father by a large shining sun, the Son by a lesser sun shining, and the Holy Ghost by a dove, as in some great Bibles from England. It is lamentable to think how frequent of late the blasphemous pictures of Christ hanging on the cross are grown among Protestants, by Rome's art, no doubt, to fit the nations for their idolatry. All these are directly contrary to God's word, Isa. xl. 18. Deut. iv. 15, 19.

Though Christ be man, yet he is God too, and therefore no image can nor may represent him. Yea, what image can there be of his body now, seeing he never sat for it? He is now glorified, and so cannot be pictured as he is even in his human nature. There is nothing more ready to beget mean thoughts of Christ, Hab. ii. 18; and if it should stir up devotion, that is worshipping by an image, which is idolatry here forbidden.

3dly, The having of these images, though we do not worship them. For if it be a sin in itself to make them, how can they be innocent that keep them? Deut. vii. 5. It is a strange inconsistency in some to pretend to abhor images, and yet themselves will keep them. They may be a snare to others, and therefore should be removed, blotted or torn out of books, if in them. For their very being is an injury to the great, invisible, and incomprehensible Majesty.

4thly, Images of false gods, such as the heathens worshipped, and of such angels and saints as the Papists worship, we should beware of, because of the danger of idolatry, Exod. xxxii. 8. Hezekiah destroyed the brazen serpent, that had

been abused to idolatry. A zeal against them as God's rivals, which have got the worship due to him, is very natural to a child of God touched with God's honour, Psal. xvi. 4.

*5thly*, Images of God, Christ, angels, or saints, ought not to be set up in churches or places of worship, though men do not worship them. (1.) Because they are monuments of idolatry, that ought to be removed, Deut. vii. 5; and destroyed, Exod. xxiii. 24. (2.) Hezekiah is commended for breaking the brazen serpent, because the children of Israel burnt incense to it, 2 Kings xviii. 4. (3.) It is stumbling, as an occasion of idolatry, and as it prejudices Turks and Jews against the Christian religion, and grieves the hearts of tender Christians.

2. All idolatrous worship is forbidden here as abominable idolatry, *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.* The sorts of idolatry forbidden here, are,

*1st*, Worshipping of false gods by images, as the heathens did their Jupiter, Apollo, and the rest. Such was the worship of Baal among the idolatrous Israelites, Rom. xi. 4.

*2dly*, Worshipping the images themselves of God, Christ, and saints, which is contrary to the very letter of this command. See Lev. xxvi. 1. The Papists are most abominable idolaters in this respect, bowing to stocks and stones. Their principles allow them a worship more than civil, which they call service, and that for the images themselves properly; contrary to the express words of this command, *Thou shalt not serve them*, Gal. iv. 8. And the images of God and Christ get the most plain divine worship, though some distinguish, they get it not for themselves, but for what they represent. But get it as they will, it is plain they do get it, and that therefore the Papists are as real idolaters as ever the Pagans were, worshipping the work of their own hands. And accordingly they bow down to images, kiss them, offer incense to them, pray to them, &c.

*3dly*, Worshipping God in and by an image. The Papists wipe their mouth, and say, they have not sinned, when they do not believe the image to be God, and do not terminate their worship on the image itself, but worship God in and by it. And when they have said this, what say they more than what the heathens had to say, and did say to the Christians of old? Did they believe that their images were the very gods they worshipped? Nay, they made many images of one



god, as of Jupiter ; and when they grew old, they cast them off, and got new ones. But did they change their gods? No, Jer. ii. 11. Were not the Israelites abominable idolaters in the worship of the golden calf? Psal. cvi. 19, 20. Yet they did but worship Jehovah by it, Exod. xxxii. 5. So Jeroboam's golden calves were intended but as means whereby to worship the true God, 1 Kings xii. 26. So the calf-worship remained after Baal's worship was destroyed out of Israel by Jehu. The same was the case with Micah's idolatry, Judg. xvii. 13. and xviii. 6.

*4thly*, The worshipping of a man for some relation to God, of the Pope as God's vicar on earth. They call him their Lord, and a God upon earth. And when he is new made, he is twice set upon the altar, and worshipped by the cardinals. And he does not only admit the kissing of his feet, but expects and requires it as Christ's vicar. He is carried in procession, as the heathens carried their idols, and they themselves the sacrament, which they account God, great and small worshipping him as a God, if they think the honour redounds to God, so did Cornelius, Acts x. 25, 26.

*Lastly*, The same idolatry is in their worshipping of angels, saints, reliques, the cross, bread in the sacrament, though they think the honour redounds to God. As if saints and angels had some deity in them, or God were present in the cross or reliques, and heard prayers better at and by them than any where else.

*Secondly*, There is superstition and will-worship; that is, whatever (though not idolatry) is brought into religion as a part of it, which God has not appointed in his word. The command says, *Thou shalt not make*, &c. that is, but thou shalt receive the worship and ordinances as God hath appointed them, and not add to them of men's inventions, Deut. iv. 2. As irreligion regards not God's ordinances, so superstition brings in others; by irreligion men take away from the ordinances of God, by superstition they add to them. Both are hateful to God. Under this head are forbidden,

1. All making of things to be sin or duty which God has not made so, Matth. xv. 2. Whatever be men's pretences in this, it is an invading of the power and authority of the great Lawgiver, an accusing of his word of imperfection, and very dangerous, Prov. xxx. 6. This is the great occasion of sad divisions and schisms in the church, while men,

not content with plain duty appointed of God, make the conceptions of their own hearts sins and duties, which God never made so, and impose them on others as terms of Christian communion, which superstition can never be sanctified by their fathering it wrongously on the scripture, Prov. xxx. 6.

2. Religiously abstaining from any thing which God does not require us so to abstain from. Men will have their ordinances as God has his; and O how hard is it to keep men from religious inventions of their own! Col. ii. 20, 21. This is sinful in itself, religiously binding up ourselves where God has left us free, as if that could be acceptable service to God, which, like Jeroboam's feast-day, 1 Kings xii. ult. is devised of our own heart. But much more is it so when it justles out plain commanded duty, Matth. xv. 5, 6. Such is the withdrawing from the public ordinances dispensed by Christ's sent servants lawfully called, and not mixed with men's inventions.

3. All unwarrantable observations and expectations of effects from causes which have no such virtue from God, either by the nature he has given them, or by any special appointment of his. Of this sort of superstitions ignorant people are full, being the yet unpurged dregs of Popery and Paganism. Such as,

*1st*, Looking on such or such accidents as lucky or unlucky, whereby they are filled with fear or hope, as if these things were a part of their bible; as if a hare or a cat cross their way, the salt fall on the table, if they sneeze in the morning when they go out, or stumble in the threshold, the ear tingle, &c.

*2dly* Looking on certain days as lucky or unlucky to begin or do a work upon; because there are such days of the weak, or of the year, that are called dismal days, or that they are such and such holidays, as some will not yoke their plough on Yule-day, Deut. xviii. 10.

*3dly*, Carrying useless things about them for safety from devils, witches, temptations, or dangers; as Papists use to carry the reliques of some saints about their necks. This is not to be expected from the carrying the Bible about with us; for it is only the using it by faith and prayer that avails; and as little can any such safety be warrantably expected from any kind of wood, &c. and many such like things.

4. All laying an unwarranted weight on circumstances of

worship that is appointed of God. And so men keeping by the worship which God has appointed, may be guilty of superstition. As,

*1st*, When they lay weight upon the place where it is performed, as if it were more holy and acceptable to God, and beneficial to men, in one place than another; whereas all difference of places is taken away under the gospel. That is superstition to think praying and preaching more holy and profitable in a kirk than a barn, &c. or on a hill-side than in the church.

*2dly*, When men lay an unwarranted weight on their bodily posture in worship, carrying these things farther than God requires in his word. Much is made of these external gestures, especially where there is least religion, as in the churches of England and Rome, where these gestures are so appointed and multiplied, that it makes God's worship look very unlike that gravity required of Christians in the worship of God. So men may be guilty, as thinking prayer with their knees on the ground more acceptable than on a cushion, their knees bare than covered, &c.

*3dly*, Tying the worship of God to certain accidents, as to pray when one sneezeth, and say, God bless. This is originally a heathenish custom. Sneezing was so much observed among them, that it came at length to be accounted a god; and it was their usual prayer, when one sneezed, God save.

*4thly*, Laying weight upon instruments, administrators of ordinances, as if they were of more efficacy being administered by one than another having the same divine mission, and administering them according to the same institution of Christ.

*5thly*, Laying an unwarrantable weight on such a number of prayers, and reading such a number of chapters, and hearing such a number of sermons. And, in a word, laying weight on any thing about God's worship where God has laid none.

*Lastly*, All additions and inventions of men in God's worship and ordinances, Deut. xii. ult. With these the worship and ordinances of God are mightily corrupted in some churches. All these are here forbidden: As,

*1st*, The five sacraments the Papists have added to the two appointed by Christ, as orders, penance, marriage, confirmation, and extreme unction.



*2dly*, The Apocryphal books they have added to the scriptures of the Old Testament.

*3dly*, The officers in the church that the Papists have added to those appointed by Christ, Popes, Cardinals, Patriarchs, &c. and which with them Prelatists have added, Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, &c.

*4thly*, The holidays they have added to the Lord's day.

*Lastly*, The heap of insignificant ceremonies wherewith the worship of God is burdened in Popery, and in the church of England. These are inventions of men, most of which the English service-book has borrowed from Papists who had many of them from the Pagans.

The patrons of false worship, whether idolatrous or superstitious, have a special respect to their own inventions, because they are their own, Psal. cvi. 39; and go about to impose them on others, under the pretence of their being delivered to them from great and good men, Matth. xv. 2, 9; their antiquity, 1. Pet. i. 18; custom, Jer. xlv. 17; devotion, Isa. lxxv. 5; good intent, 1 Sam. xv. 21. But what we call for is divine warrant, Who hath required these things at your hands? There are several ways how people may be guilty of the breach of this command with respect to a false religion and worship.

1. The tolerating of it by those who have power to suppress it, Rev. ii. 14.

2. By devising it, Numb. xv. 39

3. By counselling to follow it, Deut. xiii. 6, 7, 8.

4. By commanding it, Hos. v. 11.

5. By using it, 1 Kings xi. 33.

6. *Lastly*, By any wise approving of it.

Let us abhor the idolatry of Popery, and the superstitions of the church of England, which they had from the Papists, and would fain impose on us, remembering that God's command discharges all inventions of men in his worship; and our covenants, particularly the national covenant, whereby we are most expressly bound against them\*.

\*. In the author's manuscript the following paragraph is immediately subjoined, viz.

"Having spoke of the irreligion and false worship, idolatry, and superstition, forbidden in this command, the snares and dangers of our day oblige me to be a little more particular, (for the glory of God, the interest of your souls, and the exoneration of my own conscience, whatever

I shall shut up all with laying before you, in a few words, the reasons annexed to this command.

1. God's sovereignty over us, *I the Lord*. So he has the sole power and authority to appoint the laws and ordinances by which we must be governed in his worship and service ;

these present confusions may end in), in making the native application of my text against the church of Rome, and the church of England, who have both of them, the one as the master, and the other as the scholar, signalized themselves in the art of making to themselves in the worship of God : A sinful art forbidden by this command. The inventions of both are already set up in our land, and many have gone a-whoring after them, and the purity of ordinances in this church is in hazard of being swallowed up by the one or the other at this day. And indeed the English service is so far Roman, that if our enemies find us not disposed to take on the blackness of Popery at first dash, it may serve to prepare us for it, as a dip in the blue vat prepares cloth to take on jet black. Therefore I shall, (1.) Consider the English liturgy. (2.) Popery, as it is particularly abjured in our national covenant ; under which particulars of Popery we will find Prelacy and ceremonies also rejected and abjured."

The preparer of this work for the Press would have willingly inserted what the author said on both these subjects ; but the manuscript, on examination, was found imperfect, especially in the article relating to the English liturgy ; and quite illegible in several places relating to the other head. So that he has been obliged, though reluctantly, to drop both. He shall only subjoin what the author advanced after his explication of the national covenant, as follows.

" Now, upon the whole, I shall put you in mind of two things clearly following from what is said.

" 1. That church in Scotland which owns and maintains the doctrine contained in the large confession of faith of the church of Scotland, detests and abhors the errors and corruptions abjured in the short confession, or national covenant, both with respect to doctrine and discipline, is the same government or discipline, to wit, Presbyterian government, which is sworn to therein, we ought by the covenant to join ourselves unto, and keep communion with, not only in hearing the word preached, but in the use of the holy sacraments. But such is the present established church of Scotland. And our separatists \* cannot, nor can the world shew, that our doctrine and discipline is any other. But they would impose upon us other terms of communion than what are contained in this our national covenant, which is the bond to knit together the members of the church of Scotland. And so withdrawing from the communion of this church is a palpable breach of this covenant. And if men will pretend that they are bound up from the duty of this covenant by any subsequent oaths, acts, or engagements whatsoever, that is the sin of covenant-breaking with a witness, taking one engagement to elude another prior solemn engagement, which cannot be loosed.

" 2. Popery, Prelacy, ceremonies, and profaneness, as they are forbidden

\* The author means the Old Dissenters, the followers of Mr Macmillan.

and for others to take it upon them, is an invading of his sovereignty, which we must by no means own, Jer. vii. 31.

2. His propriety in us, *Thy God*. Therefore we must not go a-whoring after our own or others inventions, which alienate the heart from God, but must keep ourselves undefiled with these things; as a chaste wife holding by her husband, who will neither be a whore nor behave like one, Hos. ix. 1. Because he is our God (I mean), we must neither be idolaters nor superstitious, symbolizing with idolaters.

3. The zeal he hath to his own worship, *I—a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, &c.* Zeal or jealousy is an affection of a husband, whereby he can endure no partner in his wife's love, but is highly incensed against it, if any such thing there be. So the Lord is specially displeased with all false worship, as spiritual whoredom, and has such a peculiar regard to the matter of his worship, that is a most dangerous thing to make a wrong step in it, Lev. x. 1, 2. This zeal appears, (1.) In his accounting the breakers of this command haters of him, though idolaters and superstitious persons pretend highly to love and honour him, and threatening to punish them to the third and fourth generation, because so long men may live, and see themselves punished in their children. Not that God properly punishes one for another's sin; but that from the parents sin he often takes occasion to punish children for their own sins, and such their parents sins oft-times are by imitation, or some way approving of them. (2.) In his accounting the observers of this command such as love him, and promising mercy unto them to many generations, even thousands of theirs after them,

in the word of God, so they are by this covenant accursed things in this church, to be rejected and detested, as we would not bring the curse of the covenant upon us. The Lord has wonderfully owned this covenanted work of reformation, and it has been a burdensome stone, that has crushed many, who have set themselves to roll it out of the way. The building up of those things cast down by it, has been to some as the rebuilding of Jericho to him that undertook that work, on whom a curse was entailed. It has been witnessed unto by the wrestlings of many, and resisting even unto blood by the Lord's witnesses in Scotland, who chose rather to lose their lives than to quit it. Now, the danger of a root-stroke is great. Ye see what is your duty, whatever the danger may be. Let us labour for grace to be faithful unto death, that we may receive the crown of life."



## OF THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 7.—*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

AS the first command respects the object of worship, and the second the means, so this third hath respect to the right manner of worship. In the words there are two things.

1. The command, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* It is expressed negatively, to strike into men the greater awful reverence of that glorious and great name. Now, as men by their names are known, and distinguished one from another, so by the name of God we are to understand generally, whatsoever it is whereby God makes himself known, which we learn from his word and works. ‘For no man hath seen God at any time,’ John i. 18; nor do we know any thing of him, but what he has been so pleased to reveal of himself. So that God being thus revealed unto us, the scope of this command is to bind upon us a holy reverence of him, so far as he has revealed himself to us.

To take this name *in vain*, signifies, (1.) To a lie, or falsely. God is a God of truth; and his name must not be any ways interposed to falsehood, as they do who father their own lies on him, or call him to witness to a lie in swearing falsely. (2.) *In vain*; God is great, and we must not use his name in thought, word, or writing, lightly without just cause, rashly without reverence, or unprofitably to no good purpose, God’s honour, the good of ourselves or others, and much less contumeliously and wickedly, as in cursing and blaspheming.

The positive part is implied, viz. That we must hallow the name of God, treat it holily and reverently, Isa. viii. 13. interposing it only to truth, whereof he is the author, and that upon his own call, with reverence, for his honour, and the good of ourselves and others.

2. The reason annexed to this command. *For the Lord*

*will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* Where observe,

(1.) The evil threatened against the breakers of this command. *The Lord will not hold them guiltless.* Two things are remarkable here. [1.] In that it is said, *The Lord will not hold them guiltless*, it implies, that profaners of God's name many times hold themselves guiltless. They abuse God's name, and then wipe their mouths, and say they have not sinned. Men hold them guiltless, they escape punishment from men; but while both themselves and others let the plea sleep, God will awaken it, and take the quarrel in his own hand. [2.] In that it is said, *The Lord will not hold them guiltless*, more is meant than is expressed, viz. that God will severely punish the profaning of his name. The less they think of it, God will think the more of it, and men shall find peculiar severe resentments of this sin from a highly provoked God. They will find, that though it lies far from their hearts, yet it touches a holy God near.

(2.) How particular the threatening is, *Hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* The sin is repeated in the threatening, to shew the heinousness of it, how ill God takes it to have his name taken in vain. And though it be a common sin, yet none shall be hid or escape among the multitude of criminals, but God will bring out this man and that man, even every man that is a profaner of his name, and judge him as particularly, and punish him as severely, as if there were but one man in the fault. And though some, by their being set above others in the world, think they may take a latitude in this sin, yet, be the man who he will, him will God punish for it: were he the greatest on earth, he shall know that his tongue is not his own, but that JEHOVAH is Lord over him.

(3.) How peremptory the threatening is: it is not simply said, God will punish him that taketh his name in vain, but *God will NOT hold him guiltless.* Let him not think to escape, God will not quit his honour so. His glory engages him to resent the dishonour done to his name, and the abuser of it shall not go free. If God's name be profaned by him, it shall be glorified upon him one way or other.

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall shew,

I. What is required in this command.

II. What is forbidden in it.

III. The reason annexed to it.

IV. Make some improvement;

I am to shew what is required in the third command. It 'requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works.'

And here I shall shew,

1. What is the name of God by which he makes himself known, which is to be hallowed by us.

2. What is our duty with respect to this glorious name, in all the parts thereof.

First, I shall shew what is the name of God by which he makes himself known, which is to be hallowed by us. Under this are comprehended.

1. The particular names that God takes to himself in his word, as *Jehovah, Lord, God, I am, &c.* *Exod. vi. 3.* And whereas he is one God in three persons, we take in here the names of all the three, the Father, the Son, who is also called *Jesus Christ, Immanuel, and the Holy Ghost.*

2. The titles of God. For as great men have titles of honour, whereby they are distinguished from others, so God has taken certain titles to himself, as *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Preserver of Men, Hearer of Prayer, &c.* So the three persons in the Trinity have titles. The Father is called *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* the Son, *King of kings, Lord of lords, Head of the Church, &c.* and the Spirit, *the Comforter, Sanctifier, &c.*

3. The attributes of God, that is, his perfections and properties, whereby he is distinguished from all the creatures; such as, his eternity, unchangeableness, infinity, omniscience, &c. in a word, all the glorious properties of the divine nature common to all the three persons. Each of these is as it were a letter of his name, *Exod. xxxiii. 19.* 'I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.' *Chap. xxxiv. 6.*

7. 'The Lord—proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.' And happy they that can believingly read this name.

4. The ordinances of God. These are his name by which he is known in the world, *Micah iv. 5.* with *Luke i. 6.*



Such are prayer, praise, the sacraments, &c; oaths, for swearing by the name of God when we are duly called thereto, is a part of religious worship, and a very solemn and awful ordinance of God, Deut. x. 20. So are lots an ordinance of God, wherein the decision of any thing is committed to Divine Providence, and thereby God makes his will known. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 24, 26.

5. His word, which we have in the holy scriptures, Psal. cxxxviii. 2. This is to be read by us, preached and heard, that we may thereby know our God; for therein is his name unfolded, both in the law and in the gospel, which are the two parts thereof.

6 *Lastly*, His works. By these is he known, viz. his works of creation, Psal. xix. 1; and of providence, whether of mercy, Acts xiv. 17; or of judgment, Psal. ix. 19.

*Secondly*, I come now to shew what is our duty with respect to this glorious name in all the parts thereof. We may take it up in these two things.

1. We are to use it in all the parts thereof as we are called. God has laid it before us for our use, and we ought to take it up. This is plainly implied in the command, not to take it in vain: for (observe) there is a great difference betwixt the orders Heaven gives concerning the name of other gods, and the name of the true God, Exod. xxiii. 13. ‘Make no mention of the names of other Gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth;’ compared with this command, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*. And indeed when God gives us his names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works, if we use them not we take them in vain, 2 Cor. vi. 1. Now, there are three ways how we may be said to use this name.

1st, In thought, whether by simple conceiving of it, and the several parts of it, or by settled meditation upon it. Thus we are to take up the name of God into our minds, thinking and meditating upon his names, titles, attributes, &c. And thus that question, ‘What is his name?’ Prov. xxx. 4. may be our continual study, our every day’s lesson; and it will serve us to learn as long as we are in the world; and no wonder, for it is what the saints in heaven are learning, and will learn through eternity. This is our duty, and would be a most profitable study, being a great part of the life of faith, whereby the soul feeds on God himself.

*2dly*, In words, whether by speaking of it, or writing of it. And thus we are to take it up in our lips and pens. The first is the duty of all; the second of some only, whom God calls and has fitted thereunto, as he did the prophets, apostles, and others, who by their writings have been useful to particular persons, or to the church of God. To speak of God is the great end of speech that is given to man, made to be the mouth of the creation; and therefore our tongue is called our glory, by which we ought to contribute to the displaying of the glory of God, in his names, titles, &c.

*3dly*, In deeds; and so we are to take up this holy name in our practice, making conscience of the practice of the duties enjoined in God's word and ordinances, praying, reading, hearing, communicating, swearing by his name, when in a lawful oath duly called thereto, &c. Thus a practical profession of religion, as well as a verbal profession, is a duty of this command. And,

(1.) A verbal profession is necessary at some times; that is, when we are by the providence of God called thereunto, to give a testimony unto the truth, 1 Pet. iii. 15. For then it is asked, as it were, By what name are we called? and then we must not be ashamed of our Father, before men, but meekly though boldly declare it even in words, Rom. x. 10; and so take up his name before the world; owning his names, incommunicable titles, attributes, ordinances, &c.

(1.) A real or practical profession is necessary at all times Rev. xiv. 1. having our Father's name written in our foreheads; that is, we must not only be, but give out ourselves in our way and carriage to be the servants of God, following the duties of religion, whereby we are distinguished from the world that have no profession; and so professing his name in the several parts thereof.

Three things make this threefold use of the name of God necessary.

[1.] The glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. Lev. x. 3; for by his name he has made his glory shine; but if we use it not, we do what in us lies to put that glory under a bushel. Whereas for his honour we should use it in all the parts thereof.

[2.] Our own good, Jer. xxxii. 39. The name of God is good at all times, but especially in a time of trouble, Prov. xviii. 10. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the

righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' Every part of his name is a secret chamber, where a believer may feed, feast, and be safe in the worst of times. His names and titles are cordials to a fainting soul; his attributes are a magazine of comfort, and a fountain of fulness for all wants; his ordinances are breasts of consolations; his word is a good heritage; and his works are full of wonder, declaring what a great and good God he is.

[3.] The good of others. It is a great kindness to a blinded world to take up this name in our lips and lives. It is like the pouring out of ointment, and breaking of spices, that they may find the fragrant smell, and desire to be partakers, John iv. We should commend his names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works to others. It is glory to God, good for us, and may do good to others. It was Christ's work, John xvii. 26. and was comfortable to him when going out of the world, and would be so to us at that hour.

*Secondly*, We are to use this name in all the parts of it holily and reverently, whatever way we use the same, whether in thought, word, or deed. This is very extensive; but there are three things especially aimed at in the holy and reverent use of God's name.

1. The using of it in faith. If we use not his names, titles, &c. in faith, we take them in vain, Heb. xi. 6. Rom. xiv. ult. If we believe not his being, what his names and titles import, our giving them to him is but hypocritical compliment. Do we call him Hearer of prayer? let us be sure of the faith of it, or we do but mock God. If we believe not his word, as it will not please him, so it will not profit us, Heb. iv. 2. Unbelief makes us take his name in vain.

2. In fear. To use the name of God without fear and reverence of his majesty, is to abuse it, Deut. xxviii. 58. His names and titles are dreadful, though sweet. I may say of them as of the rings, they are so high that they are dreadful Ezek. i. 18. His attributes are so: for even that love, mercy, and grace towards sinners, comes not but through the wounds made in the side of the Mediator by the sword of justice. His ordinances need nothing from men to make them awful; in their greatest simplicity they have an impression of divine authority on them, and God's special presence in them, sufficient to awe the hearts of them that are



not blinded. His word has a peculiar majesty in it ; and the meanest of his works bear the impression of a divine hand. And shall we use them without fear?

3. In singleness, to a right end ; not for no end, a carnal selfish end, far less a wicked end ; but for the honour of God, the good of ourselves and others. It is a precious treasure opened unto sinners for their eternal welfare, not to be lavished out to no good purpose, but for the highest and best ends. So that these things must be reserved as sacred, and not meddled with but in matters, of highest importance. More particularly,

*1st*, We must holily and reverently use his names and titles, when we think, speak, or any way handle them, with aith, fear, and singleness, having a holy dread and awe of his majesty on our spirits, as believing him to be what he calls himself, Jer. v. 22. and looking on him as his name is high above all.

*2dly*, We must holily and reverently use his attributes, thinking and speaking of them in a reverent and spiritual manner, and making such use of them for our own particular case, and the case of others, as the revealing of them is designed for, otherwise we use them in vain, Psal. cxxx. 4. 2 Cor. v. 11.

*3dly*, We must holily and reverently use his ordinances going about all of them in the right manner ; praying in the spirit, singing with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord ; preaching or hearing in faith, communicating worthily with grace and grace in exercise, &c. In a word, it requires all to be done in the ordinances after the right manner. Particularly,

(1.) We must use God's name holily and reverently in an oath. When the oath being lawful, and we are called to it by authority, we ' swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness,' Jer. iv. 2.

(1.) In truth ; which implies, (1.) That the thing be truth in itself which we swear to, otherwise we call God to witness to a lie. (2.) That we be persuaded in our consciences that it is truth. So that here is required an agreement of our words with the truth of the thing sworn, and an agreement of our minds with our words Psal. xv. 2. (3.) That it be without fraud or deceit, whereby all equivocations or mental reservations are to be far from oaths, as we would not

profane that sacred name; and the intent of the imposer is to be regarded.

(2.) In judgment; which implies, (1.) That we must understand the thing we swear, that it be not dubious and perplexed, swearing we know not what. (2.) That we understand the nature of an oath, viz. that we thereby solemnly call God to witness to the truth of what we assert or promise, and to judge us according to the truth or falsehood of what we swear, And therefore, (3.) That it be gone about with a due fear and reverence of God on our spirit, as knowing it is God we have to do with. Hence the righteous man is represented as one that feareth an oath.

(3.) In righteousness; which implies, (1.) That the thing we swear be lawful and just; for an oath is abused when it is made a bond of iniquity; and so that the thing be possible, and in our power. (2.) That it be for good ends viz. that God be glorified, Josh. vii. 19; our neighbour satisfied, and controversy ended, Heb. vi. 16; our own innocence cleared, Exod. xxii. 11, &c. (3.) That we mind well and firmly resolve to perform it.

(2.) In lots God's name is holily and reverently used, when,

(1.) They are used in a matter of weight; for the end of them is the same with that of an oath, Prov. xviii. 18. And the nature of them is not unlike, being an appeal to God's decision, Prov. xvi. 33. And so we find they are weighty cases in scripture wherein they are used, as in the cases of Jonah and Matthias.

(2.) When they are necessary, and the matter cannot otherwise be decided without great inconveniences, as in the above cases. And reason teaches, that this being God's decision, men ought not without great necessity to go off the ordinary road.

(3.) When men eye God in the lot, look to him for the decision, with calling on his name, Jonah i. Acts i.

(4.) When the matter is singly given up to God, and no fraud or trick is used to cast the matter to one side rather than another; for that is to put the decision first in God's hand, and then to take it out again, which is a mocking of God.

(5.) *Lastly*, When with due reverence that is received

which falls by the lot, as coming from the determination of God.

Were these things duly considered, I think men would not make such use of lotting, by casting cavils, drawing cuts, &c. but would satisfy themselves otherwise many times.

*4thly*, We must holily and reverently use the word, thinking of, speaking, and hearing it with godly fear, as the word of God, and that we may obey it.

*5thly*, and *lastly*, We must holily and reverently use his works, thinking of, speaking of, and using them to the honour of God, our own and others welfare, adoring the Author, and giving him the praise of all.

To shut up all, we do thus use the name of God, by having a conversation suitable to that great and glorious name we profess to honour, Phil. i. 27. For we take his name in vain when our practice thwarts our profession; for that makes the name of God to be blasphemed, Rom. ii. 24.

II. I proceed to shew what is forbidden in the third commandment. It 'forbids all profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known.'

This command is broken two ways.

1. By not using the name of God as is required, Mal. ii. 2. So as many duties as are required, so many sins there are in omitting these duties. Hence this command is broken by our not hallowing and glorifying God's name, by not taking up the name of God into our minds, lips, and lives. We contract guilt against this command by not thinking and meditating on God's titles, attributes, &c. not speaking of them for the glory of God, our own and the good of others; not writing of it when men are gifted for it, and have a real call to do it. So also by not making a profession of religion; a real profession at all times; a verbal profession when men are by providence called thereto. Not using God's ordinances. Particularly it is a sin against this command, to refuse an oath touching what is good and just, when duly called thereunto. For in all these cases there is a neglect of the duty of glorifying God's name enjoined in this command.

2. By profaning or abusing of the name of God; that is, any thing whereby God makes himself known. This is the great sin forbidden in this command; a bitter root that



spreads itself out with many branches. In speaking to it, I shall shew,

1. The more plain and palpable profanations of that holy name forbidden in this command.

2. Other ways how the Lord's name is abused and taken in vain.

*First.* I am to shew the more plain and palpable profanations of that holy name forbidden in this command. The name of God is plainly and palpably abused,

1. When it is used ignorantly, as it was by the Athenians, whom the apostle Paul charges with worshipping God ignorantly, Acts xviii. 23. And of this all those that are ignorant of God, Christ, and the way of salvation, cannot but be guilty, when they do at all use that holy name: for as no man can work right in the dark, so the darkness of ignorance on the soul utterly unfits it to glorify the name of God. And in what measure soever that culpable ignorance lies on us, so far are we guilty in that case. How is the name of God abused by ignorant persons, while they mention the name of they know not whom, and speak of him they know not what? They will call God their God, who know not the nature of that God, the covenant of grace, or the way how he becomes ours. They will call Christ their sweet Saviour, while they know not who he is, nor are acquainted with his salvation. They will call his Spirit their Sanctifier, who know nothing of his sanctifying operations and influences.

2. When it is used vainly and irreverently, that is, lightly and rashly. There is so little of God in the hearts of many, that his name, that dreadful name, is much in their mouths, without any necessity or reverence in their common talk. The Jews had so great thoughts of the name Jehovah, that they would not mention it. They permit not their children to mention the name of God till they be seven years old. If the Mahometans find a piece of paper in the way, they put it in some hole of a wall or so, because the name of God is or may be in it. But, alas! among Christians it is much used in vain and irreverently. The name of God is thus profaned, vainly and irreverently used,

1st, By exclamations in a way of foolish wonder. It is sad to think how that holy name is profaned by men, when, being surprised to see, or hear, something they wonder at

they cry, O God! O Lord! God bless us, save us, guide us, have a care of us! That it is lawful to pray for these things, none doubt. But such as are in earnest for his blessing, guidance, &c. will see them to be matters of so great moment, that, when they are to seek them, they will compose themselves to a praying frame, and lift up their hands with their hearts to the heavens for them, with singleness, fear and faith, in the blood of Christ. But, to use this holy name, to give a vent to our foolish passions, is horrible prostitution of it.

*2dly*, It is used vainly and irreverently, in thanksgivings to God, and salutations. How formally and lightly will many say, God be thanked, Blessed be God. when the very shew of their countenance declares they have no grateful sense of God's goodness, nor reverence of him on their spirits? So God speed you, God be with you, are good prayers indeed, but mostly used so formally, that they are but an abusing of that holy name.

*3dly*, In obsecrations, wherein the name of God is interposed to beseech a person to do or forbear such a thing. They are very good when in matters of weight they are gravely and reverently used, as Rom. xii. 1. 'I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' But to use them in small matters, as many do, intreating for God's sake, or God's love, to do so and so, is but abusing that holy name. Common beggars are very guilty this way.

*4thly*, In adjurations, wherein the name of God is interposed to oblige a person to do or forbear something. This is a very solemn piece of business, 2 Tim. iv. 1. and may very safely be used by those who have authority in matters of weight; and people's slighting of those solemn charges given by ministers, or other superiors, is very sinful. But it is a sin, (1.) To use these things in light matters, as to bid one do any thing we are little concerned about, in God's name. (2.) And though any person may pray to God against devils, that he would bind them up, yet it is a sin for any who have not the gift of casting out devils, to adjure the devil, or command him in the name of God to go, as the vagabond Jews did, Acts xix. 13, 14.

*5thly*, In appeals to God. We find the saints using them

reverently in matters of weight, as the apostle Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 2. but to appeal to God in trifles, is the way to bring down the judgment of God on the appellant. The serious thoughts of God's knowledge may make the best to tremble, and strike all with so much awe of his Majesty as not to make a by-word of it.

3. When the name of God is used superstitiously, 1 Sam. iv. 3, 4, 5. So, to name the name of God over diseases, or against the devil, as if the very mentioning of that name, without faith in him, would do the business. So is that bowing at the name of Jesus, used by those of the church of England, a superstitious abuse of that holy name.

4. When it is used profanely and wickedly. Under this may be comprehended,

1st, Profane swearing. Swearing is an holy ordinance, appointed by God, a piece of most solemn worship, wherein we invoke God as our witness and judge, which makes common swearing a dreadful sin. It is twofold, both of them abounding in our day.

(1.) Swearing by God and Christ. How do many glory in their horrid oaths, which may make one that has any notion of the greatness of that name to tremble! They have a God to swear by, but not to worship and pray to. But indeed it is wounding, that there should be others, who will both pray to and profanely swear by that God, Jam. iii. 10.

(2.) Swearing by the creatures. The papists, that worship the creatures, no wonder they swear by them too, as by the holy bread in the sacrament, by St. Mary. But what have Protestants to say for swearing by them? Yet how frequent are oaths, by our faith, troth, soul, conscience, &c.? The mincing of these oaths will not make men guiltless; yet, alas! how few are there that want them, *Ha'th Faith, Ha'd'ye, Fa'd'ye, Mary?* This swearing by creatures is,

[1.] Impious idolatry, giving that worship to the creature which is due to God only, Deut. x. 20. Swearing is an invoking of the object we swear by, to be witness of the truth of what we affirm or deny, and so to judge and punish us if we swear falsely; and to whom can this belong but to God? Jer. v. 7.

[2.] The dishonour redounds to God, because these things have a relation to God, Mat. v. 34, 37. The soul is his creature, conscience is his depute, truth his image, &c.



Hezekiah broke the brazen serpent when the people abused it to idolatry. Take heed God break not that soul of thine on the wheel of his wrath.

As for your minced oaths, I pray you consider, (1.) That they are at least an appearance of evil, 1 Thess. v. 22. (2.) That they are surely idle words, Matth. xii. 36. (3.) Are not the most serious Christians conscientious in this? Phil. iv. 9. (4.) That they are offensive to the serious godly, Matth. xviii. 6, 7. (5.) That they must either be oaths, or they have no sense at all.

*2dly*, Sinful imprecations or cursings, whereby people pray for some evil against themselves or others, whether absolutely, or conditionally. We find the saints conditionally imprecating evil against themselves, as in the case of clearing themselves of what they are wrongously loaded with, Psal. vii. 3, 4, 5. And in this we may imitate them, when in matters of weight we are duly called thereto, behaving therein as in the taking of an oath; for in every oath there is an imprecation. Also there are examples of the saints imprecating a curse against God's incorrigible enemies, out of pure zeal to the glory of God, which they, from the Spirit of prophecy, apply to particular persons, Psal. cix. 6, &c. But it is a profaning the name of God.

(1.) When people unnecessarily imprecate a curse on themselves or others, conditionally, if they do not so or so, or if it be not truth that they say, as wishing,—confound them, they may be hanged, or never stir out of the bit, &c. if matters be not so or so, when there is no necessity for it, or edification by it. In that case, the name of God is profaned; and though the name of God be not expressed, it is still abused; for it is God that must be the executor of the sinful wish.

(2.) When people serve their passions against themselves or others, by their curses. Thus people sin in their fits of discontent, wishing evil to themselves, and, in their fits of passion and revenge against others, praying, Shame fall, ill chance, &c. This is the product of a bitter Spirit, highly dishonourable to God, whose name is prostituted to serve men's hellish passions.

(3.) When people use them to confirm a lie, or to bind them to sin. Thus people are doubly guilty, and dare the vengeance of heaven, cursing themselves if such a thing be

true, which yet they know is not true; or binding themselves to do some evil, by a curse.

(4.) Neither is the matter mended by invoking the devil instead of God. Much homage gets the devil from some, who are often found praying to the devil to take themselves or others. So they mention, *Foul Fiend*, &c. which are only other names of that wicked spirit.

3dly, Perjury is falsehood, confirmed with an oath. It is twofold.

(1.) There is perjury opposite to an assertory oath; and that is, either when a man swears a thing to be true which is false, or a thing to be false which is true. It is opposite to swearing in truth, which is swearing so as a man's mind agree with his words, and his words with the thing. So that a man is not only perjured when he swears against his mind and knowledge, as the false witnesses against Naboth did; but also when he swears against the truth of the thing, though not against his mind, being mistaken; for in both cases God is called to witness to a lie; though indeed the former is far more heinous than the latter. And therefore it is, that no man can lawfully swear what he doubts of; that is to run a dreadful risk.

(2.) There is a perjury opposite to a promissory oath; and that is, either when a man promiseth something upon oath which he has no mind to perform even when he takes the oath; or though he minded to perform it when he took the oath, yet afterwards changes his mind, and does it not, when he both ought and can do it. Only remember, that the breaking of an unlawful oath, so far as it is unlawful, is not perjury. It is a sin indeed to take such an oath; but it is no sin, but duty to break it. And the case is the same in vows, 1 Sam. xxv. 22, 32, 33. The sin of perjury is dreadful. For,

[1.] It is a most solemn affronting of an omniscient and just God, and is near akin to atheism. It is a calling of God to be witness to a lie; it is a playing with infinite justice, a daring of heaven's vengeance, while men devote their souls to destruction wilfully; because in every oath men invoke God to judge them according to the truth or falsehood of what they swear.

[2.] It is most provoking in the sight of God; a sin which God's anger smokes against in a peculiar manner,

Zech. v. 4. Mal. iii. 5. This seems to be engraven especially on the consciences of men; so that this sin amongst the heathen was reckoned most atrocious; and even men that otherwise have little religion, will yet tremble at the thoughts of perjury.

[3.] It is a sin that deservedly makes men infamous, so that their testimony is not afterwards to be regarded among them: for what respect can they have to truth that will swear falsely? It looses the bond of human society; for if an oath cannot bind men, the world would have no security of one another. And therefore such deserve to be hissed out from among others, as the plagues of human society.

4thly, Blasphemy, which is a wronging of the majesty of God, by speeches tending to his reproach. This sin is the most atrocious of all sins; and of this kind is the unpardonable sin. As among men it is a great fault not to believe the word of a faithful prince; yet greater to rebel against him; greater yet to reproach him, disgrace him, speak of and use him contumeliously. Men may be guilty of blasphemy against God two ways.

(1.) As they partake with others in their blasphemies. And this we may do several ways; particularly, (1.) When we give no testimony against the blasphemy of others. The custom of the Jews was to rend their clothes at the hearing of blasphemy. And they must needs have a stout heart that can hear it without one way or another manifesting their abhorrence of it. (2.) Much more when men shew any approbation or satisfaction with it, as smiling or laughing at it, when they hear how freely hellish mouths vent their reproachful speeches against God. (3.) When by our deeds we give occasion to wicked men to blaspheme, Rom. ii. 24. Thus particularly, (1.) Oppressors and persecutors are guilty of blasphemy, Acts xxvi. 11. (2.) Professors of religion, by their scandalous walk, 2 Sam. xii. 14. (3.) Inferiors, by their undutifulness to their superiors; as subjects, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, 15; wives, Tit. ii. 5; and servants, 1 Tim. vi. 1.

(2.) As they themselves are formally the blasphemers. And so there are two ways that men blaspheme.

[1.] There is a blaspheming of God mediately, when, though men do not expressly speak against God himself, yet with the sword of the tongue they thrust at him, through the sides of his word, way, people, ordinances, works, &c.



1 Tim. vi. 1. Tit. ii. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 2. 1 Cor. iv. 13. Mark iii. 29, 30. Such blasphemies are very frequent amongst mockers and malicious enemies of the way of God, as when religion is called madness, fanaticism, folly, &c. the Spirit's assistance in prayer, heat of the brain, &c.

[2.] There is a blaspheming against God immediately, when God is directly and immediately attacked with the blasphemous tongue. And that is,

(1.) When men detract from God what truly belongs to him, and makes for his glory, Isa. xxxvi. 20; in the case of railing Rabshakeh. Such blasphemy, some say, is uttered by the French Tyrant, with respect to the bringing in of the Pretender on us, That Heaven itself cannot stop his project.

(2.) When men ascribe to God that which agrees not to him, but tends to his reproach. So did the Pharisees of old blaspheme Christ, Mark iii. 30. So do bitter spirits blaspheme God, saying, He is unjust, cruel, &c. So did these blaspheme, when they said, 'Every one that doth evil, is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them: or, Where is the God of judgment?' Mal. ii. 17. And many are guilty with them.

(3.) When men insolently rise against God, belching out bitter, virulent, and reproachful speeches against him. So did Pharaoh, Exod. v. 2. 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord.' So did he, mentioned 2 Kings vi. 33. 'Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait for the Lord any longer?' Thus Job's wife advised him to blaspheme, 'Curse God and die,' said she. And so many in their bitterness rising against God under afflictions, are apt to blaspheme.

(4.) When men ascribe that to the creature which is due to God alone. So the Jews, supposing Christ to be a mere creature, accused him of blasphemy, John x. 33. So men blaspheme in calling either Pope or magistrate head of the church. And thus men immoderate in their own praise, or the praise of others, are ready to fall into blasphemy, Isa. x. 13. Acts xii. 22.

Each of these four ways men may be guilty of blasphemy against the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost. The world is full of these blasphemies; some blaspheming the Father, denying that relation in the Godhead, as Jews, Mahometans, &c; some the Son, as they do also; and indeed Popery is

a mass of blasphemies against Christ ; some the Holy Ghost, as those that deny his personality, and the profane world that make a mock of his work.

But the most dreadful of all sins and blasphemies is that which by way of eminency is called blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, commonly called *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, which is the unpardonable sin, Matth. xii. 31, 32. John calls it ‘ the sin unto death,’ 1 John v. 16 ; which elect souls never fall into, yea even but few reprobates. It belongs to this command. But as I have spoken largely of this sin in a former part of this work, I shall not further insist upon it.

*Secondly*, Having spoke of the more gross and palpable breaches of this command, I shall now consider otherways how the Lord’s name is abused and taken in vain.

1. With respect to his names and titles. They are taken in vain,

1st, When they are not improved for those uses to which they natively tend. Hence the Lord says, ‘ If I be a Father, where is mine honour ? and if I be a Master where is my fear ? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name,’ Mal. i. 6. Thus we take them in vain when they have not their fruit in us. Do we call him Father, and not honour him ; Master, and not fear him ; Hearer of prayer, and yet put no confidence in him ; Lord of hosts, and yet cannot quietly commit ourselves to his protection ? Do we not thereby take his name in vain ? The strong tower of his name is built but in vain, in that case, when we do not improve it.

2dly, When we make an ill use of them, either to encourage ourselves in sin by them, or to drive us away from him by terror, or to any other use dishonourable to God, and contrary to the intent of the revelation of them to us.

2. With respect to his attributes, God’s name is abused,

1st, By the working of unbelief against them, doubting of, questioning, and denying them. Thus the atheistical heart works often in wicked men, calling in question the power of God when driven into straits, 2 Kings vii. 2 ; and when they mind to lie securely in sin, fostering unbelief of his omniscience, Ezek. ix ; of his justice, Zeph. i. 12 ; of his holiness, Psal. l. 21, &c. Yea, thus under temptation it works even in the godly, so that often they are found bordering on

blasphemy, through the power of unbelief, questioning his goodness and truth, Psal. lxxvii. 8, 9. Jer. xv. 18.

*2dly*, By the aversion of the heart unto them, and its rising against them, Rom. viii. 7. There is a natural enmity in the heart of man against God, shewing itself in the aversion they have to his holy nature and attributes. They do not love his perfections; they would wish he were not such a one as he is; and this is the rise of atheism. The heart is glued to sin; and the discovery of God's attributes, his holiness, justice, &c. disturbs sinners in their rest in it. Hence their hearts rise against God, and his perfections.

*3dly*, By using of them to wrong ends and purposes. Thus we sin many ways, perverting the knowledge of his perfections to God's dishonour and our own ruin. Thus the mercy of God is abused to encouragement in sin; his patience to continuance in it; his justice to desperation, &c. Eccl. viii. 11. Rom. ii. 4, 5.

3. With respect to his ordinances. The name of God is abused in ordinances when we do not go about them after the right manner; for this command directs us to the right manner of performing duties. And as a master reckons his servant has been working in vain, when though he has been doing the thing he bade him, yet he has not done it as he bade him, but marred it in the making; so God reckons those duties that are wrong as to the manner of them, are a taking of his name in vain, and those ordinances that are gone about in a wrong manner, in vain.

*1st*, We are guilty of profaning God's name in ordinances and duties of worship, when we are not upright in our end and aim in them; that is, having the honour of his name before us as our great end, 1 Cor. x. 31; shewing itself in seeking to honour him, to get and advance communion with him, and to give obedience to his commands. Instead thereof, his name is abused by going about ordinances formally, out of custom more than conscience, seeking ourselves more than God in them, a name and reputation more than the glory of the Divine Being.

*2dly*, When we have not a holy principle from which we act, viz. the Spirit of God in us, without whom we cannot worship in spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 3; and a renewed heart, 1 Tim. i. 5. Hence it is that no unrenewed man's duties are acceptable or truly good. And no duty can be accepted of



God, wherein we act from natural principles, parts, and abilities only, and not from supernatural gracious principles.

*3dly*, When we go not about duties in the due manner, with those other necessary qualifications of acceptable obedience, which must be sincere and not hypocritical, with faith, fear, fervency, &c.

I shall instance in some particular ordinances how we abuse the name of God in them.

1. In prayer. God's name is abused in prayer several ways.

*1st*, When before prayer we are at no pains to prepare for it, but rashly and precipitately adventure on it, Eccl. v.

1. How often do we mar it in the entrance, by our not impressing our hearts with a due sense of our own insufficiency, God's greatness and majesty, our own wants; and by not emptying our hearts of all carnal thoughts, and not using of ejaculations to God for fitting us for a more solemn approach.

*2dly*, In prayer we fail many ways. As, (1.) When we pray formally and hypocritically, our hearts not agreeing with our tongues in our confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings, Isa. xxix. 13; so that our heart-labour comes not up to our lip-labour. (2.) When we pray coldly and faintly, without fervency of spirit, Matt. xxvi. 41. This fervency consists not in the loudness of the voice, but in the eagerness of the affections, like Jacob, 'I will not let thee go except thou bless me.' (3.) Heart-wanderings much mar this duty, Rom. xii. 12. (4.) When we do not pray in faith, but are lifted up with a conceit of our own worthiness, like the Pharisee, Luke xviii. 11. have no confidence in the promises of what we ask, Jam. i. 6. and place not our sole confidence in the merits of Christ.

*3aly*, After prayer, when we quickly put out of our heads the impression of our approach, grow vain and carnal, and do not look after our prayers as to their success, Psal. v. 3.

2. In praises, or singing of psalms, God's name is taken in vain many ways. As, (1.) When we rashly venture upon it, not labouring to get our hearts in a tune for praise. (2.) When we do not understand what we sing, 1 Cor. xiv. 15; God can never be praised ignorantly. (3.) When we make not heart-work of it, sing with the voice, but make no melody in the heart to the Lord, Eph. v. 19. (4.) When we

are not affected in a suitableness to the matter that is sung, which being very different, certainly requires that our hearts should follow. (5.) When we make no application of the matter to ourselves in singing.

3. In reading or hearing of the word, we take God's name in vain, (1.) When we do not prepare ourselves for it, appointing a meal in it to our souls by prayer and looking to God; and when we make it not our business to get our hearts emptied of worldly thoughts and affections, and come with an appetite, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. (2.) When we do not strive to understand what we read or hear of the word, Acts viii. 30; but pass it, as if bare reading or hearing were all. (3.) When we are not attentive thereto, but let the heart wander in the time after other things, Ezek. xxxiii. 30. (4.) When we are dull, drowsy, sleepy, and weary in it, crying in our hearts, When will the Sabbath be over? like Doeg, detained before the Lord. (5.) When we do not receive it as the word of the living God, looking on it as God himself speaking to us, 1 Thess. ii. 13. (6.) When we do not subject ourselves humbly to what we hear from the Lord by his word, being affected suitably to every part of the word, approving the commands thereof, believing the promises, and trembling at the threatenings, Heb. iv. 2. (7.) When we do not lay ourselves open to the word, to be taught our duty, to be reprov'd for our faults, to be searched and known as by the candle of the Lord; but ward off convictions, and rise against the speaker when the word toucheth us. (8.) When we hear it partially, having more respect to the speaker, to receive it or reject it according to our opinion of him, than to the Lord's word itself, Acts xvii. 11, &c. (9.) *Lastly*, When we do not meditate upon it afterwards, confer about it, and labour to improve it to our soul's good.

4. In oaths (besides what has been already said), we take God's name in vain with respect to them. (1.) When we refuse a lawful oath, being duly called thereto, and the glory of God and the good of our neighbour requires it, Neh. v. 12. 'For an oath for confirmation is to men an end of all strife,' Heb. vi. 16; and men might be ruined in their lives, reputation, &c. if men would refuse a just and necessary oath when called to it, which God's honour and our neighbour's good requires. (2.) With respect to an unlawful oath; it is a sin, [1.] To take it or make it; for it is a terrible

profaning of that ordinance to make it a bond of iniquity, as Herod did, Mark vi. 23. [2.] To keep it and perform it, as he also did, ver. 26 ; for what is this but to make the name of God subservient to God's dishonour? And that is to be reckoned an unlawful oath, which is of any thing that is false, sinful, unjust, or impossible to us. (3.) When men use equivocations in oaths, or mental reservations; for so he for whose sake the oath is imposed, is deceived and wronged. But whatever shifts men may use that way, God will reckon them as false swearers. (4.) When men swear unnecessarily, ignorantly, doubtingly, without due regard and reverence of God on their spirits. (5.) *Lastly*, When a lawful oath leaves no due impression on men's spirits, as a sacred bond which they come under to God.

5. *Lastly*, In lots. God's name is taken in vain, (1.) When the right manner is not observed in them, where they are lawfully used in weighty matters, as when God is not eyed in the lot, when they do not singly refer and leave the matter to God's decision, and when they murmur and grudge at what falls by the lot to them. (2.) When they are used in matters of very small moment, which are not worthy of an appeal to God's decision, but without any great inconvenience might be otherwise decided. This is a very common sin, which people need no more to convince them of the evil of, but the true uptaking of the nature of lots, as the scripture holds it out, Prov. xvi. 33. and xviii. 18. (3.) When they are used in games and plays. For which reason playing at cards, dice, and all games of lottery, are unlawful. For, [1.] That cannot but be a profaning of the name of God, which turns an appeal to God for his decision unto a play. And tho' men call it fortune, it is certain that it is nothing indeed but God's determination. And it will not excuse men, that they first miscall God's providence by the name of fortune, and then play themselves with it. [2.] It gives occasion to much sin against God, as blaspheming of God's providence under the name of fortune and ill luck; and commending good fortune, overlooking providence when it falls well. And it renders this ordinance of lots contemptible, being so used.

4. With respect to his word, men are guilty of profaning the name of God,



1st, By misimproving and misapplying the word of God, as the Pharisees did, Matth. v. Ezek. xiii. 19.

2dly, Jestings upon it, Jer. xxiii. 33.

3dly, Using it to the maintenance of erroneous principles, unprofitable questions, and vain janglings, 2 Tim. ii. 14, 15.

5. With respect to his works, men are guilty of profaning the name of God, when they use the works and creatures of God to sinful lusts and practices.

6. *Lastly*, Men profane the name of God, in respect of religion, and the profession of it.

1st, By maligning, scorning, and reviling of religion, and the profession of it.

2dly, By a hypocritical profession.

3dly, By a scandalous walk.

To be a little more particular in these things, the name of God is profaned and abused, and this command violated,

1. By malignity, maligning the truth, grace, and ways of God, otherwise called *malignancy*. It is a heart-enmity and bitterness of spirit, vented by word or deed, against the truths, grace, and way of God, Rom. i. 29. Such malignants were the Jews, who were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, Acts xiii. 45. In our father's days, the spirit of malignancy run with a violent stream against the work of reformation, till it had swallowed it up, and is now again appearing in its violence. A different opinion from the truth in point of church-government is not malignancy; but when a set of men lay out themselves to bear down the Lord's work in the land, and in the spirits of his people, when men pretending to be ministers bear down and discourage the power of godliness in others, and men in civil power are filled with a spirit of persecution against those whom they can find nothing against but in the matter of their God, and meaner people aid and assist these, and contribute to, or rejoice at the calamities of the people of God, malignant is their name; for malignant is their nature and course of life. And colour it over as they will, God will not hold them guiltless; for they are his enemies that take his name in vain.

By scorning of the ways of God, Psal. i. 1. The scorner has a high seat in the devil's court, where he sits on hell's bench, giving out a sentence of disdain against the way of

serious godliness, as unworthy of a man, and inconsistent with his honour, sentencing the serious person to be the fool of the company. Thus Satan's madcaps, whom he has blinded, make a jest of the wisdom of God; but the day comes when their scorning shall be turned to roaring, Isa. xxviii. 22.

3. By reviling the truth, grace, and way of God, 1 Pet. iv. 4. Revilers are a generation of hell, who are set to gather together all the filth and vileness they can get to throw upon religion and cover it, that the world may loath it, 1 Cor. iv. 13. And so with them religion is rebellion, soul-exercise distraction, communion with God melancholy fancies. They load men with vile calumnies; and if they can see nothing without them, they conclude they are but hypocrites.

4. By hypocrisy, while men pretend to religion and take up a profession, but have nothing of the truth of it in their hearts, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Hypocrites indeed take God's name in vain, making profession of religion, not out of conscience towards God, from love to him, or a design to honour him, but for some sinister ends, as reputation, worldly advantage, or at best their own peace and safety; which is a horrid prostituting the name of God to cursed self.

1st, They take his name in vain in their hearts; for the truths of religion, they know, have no suitable efficacy on their hearts or lives, Rom. i. 18. The candle of God is set up before them in their knowledge; but in vain it wastes, for they do not work at it. Their knowledge of sin does not make them loath it. The love of Christ does not constrain them to walk in the paths of new obedience.

2dly, In their mouths. They may go about duties but they go about none in the right manner. Their words are good, but their heart is not upright, Ezek. xxxiii. 30. Hence their prayers are an abomination, their best works are but glistening sins, like a potsherd covered over with silver dross. (1.) Their largest duties are but half-duties, and that the worst half, as wanting spiritual worship, which is the soul and life of worship. (2.) Their service is but self-service. All the streams of the hypocrite's duties disburden in the dead sea, self.

3dly, On their foreheads; for there hypocrites bear it in an external profession: but in vain; for though they wear Christ's livery, they are but the devil's drudges. If they

be not such as fulfil the desires of the flesh, they fulfil the desires of the mind; they are under the power of spiritual plagues.

5. By being ashamed of religion, Mark viii. ult. Religion is our glory; men will not miss in a profane world to have it turned to shame; but to be ashamed of it is a sin of naughtiness of heart, and want of experience of the power of truth on the spirit. It is a horrible affront to the majesty of God, to be ashamed of his badge; for that is to be ashamed of him as a Master.

6. *Lastly*, By being a shame to it,

1st, By an uncomfortable, unsuitable walk, Phil. i. 27. The world takes notice of the agreement that is betwixt the principles and practice of professors; and a disagreement there reflects dishonour on religion itself before them, as if it were all but sham and trick.

2dly, By an unwise walk, Eph. v. 15. We should be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; for the imprudencies of professors are no small handle to the enemies, and much improved for the reproach of religion. There is much need of continual dependence on the Lord for wisdom, especially that we may walk in wisdom toward them that are without Col. iv. 5.

3dly, By an unfruitful walk, Isa. v. 4. The fruitfulness of the vineyard is the honour of the husbandman, and the unfruitfulness thereof reflects dishonour on him, Rom. ii. 24. The fruits of holiness are the best testimony to the divine original of ordinances and institutions; and while men have been violently running down these, their credit has been supported that way. But, alas! now their credit is impaired by the barren and unfruitful lives of professors.

4thly, By an offensive scandalous walk, Rom. ii. 23, 24. The scandals of professors are the stumbling-blocks whereon the blind would break their necks, Matth. xviii. 7. They are the reproach of religion, and the dishonour of God. They harden the wicked, and grieve the truly good.

*Lastly*, By backsliding from it, Gal. iii. 1, 2. Apostates cast shame on the name of God in a peculiar manner; for having tried both ways, they practically prefer the way of evil.

III. I come now to consider the reason annexed to the



third commandment, which is, 'That 'however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.'

Here I will shew,

1. Whence it is that men think so lightly of the profaning of the name of God, so that in effect they hold themselves guiltless.

2. Whence it is that the profaners of the name of God escape punishment from men.

3. How God will not let men escape with it.

4. What is the great evil of this sin, that it is so severely threatened.

*First*, I will shew whence it is that men think so lightly of the profaning of the name of God, so that in effect they hold themselves guiltless. Nothing is plainer than that little is thought of the taking of God's name in vain, especially by those that are most guilty. They heap up guilt this way, and yet in effect hold themselves guiltless.

1. It proceeds from that wicked and malicious spirit the devil, Jam. iii. 6. He is the sworn enemy of God, and does what he can to make men dishonour him. There is so little of the world or the flesh in it, that it seems in a special manner to come from the devil.

2. It springs from the low and mean thoughts they have of God and his dreadful name, Psal. xxxvi. 1, 2. They see not the glory and majesty of his names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works: hence they treat them as common things. A view of God in his glory would cure this profane disposition of Spirit. When proud Pharaoh contemns God, and must needs be a god to himself, what wonder he regards not that holy name? Exod. v. 2. Paul unconverted was a great blasphemer; but when he saw the light and heard the voice, he got suitable thoughts of Christ, and so was cured of that.

3. There are many profanations of the name of God, that untender men will not allow to be such. They are not and will not be convinced of a fault in them, as in obsecrations, appeals to God, adjurations, &c. But a due sense of the majesty of that name would clear people's minds in these things, Matth. v. 37. It is not enough that these things are common. It is so much the worse, when the world is in a

conspiracy against God, to join in it. Though men go in troops to the pit, they shall not be conquerors, but sufferers. Nor is it enough that people have no ill in their minds, when they so profane the name of God. If there be no ill, there is as little good. Were the third command in your minds, it would lay bonds on your tongues.

4. There are many profanations of that name which men do not at all observe, as profaning that holy name in duties, by formality, and want of faith and fervency. If they neglect duty, they will be challenged; but their consciences are stupid as to the dishonour done to God in them, Zech. vii. 3,—6. But these will be mountains in the sight of God, that are but as mole-hills in the sinner's eyes.

5. It proceeds from the passion of anger or malice. Anger is a fire in a man's breast; swearing and cursing is the smoke of this hellish fire, breaking out at the mouth. Those who are hurried out of themselves with passion, do oft-times find nothing readier at hand than an oath, which they fling out against heaven itself, when they cannot be revenged on them that have angered them. What but a hellish leaven of bitterness and malice wherewith the heart is soured, can bring forth curses.

6. Custom in taking the name of God in vain takes away the sense of it. The heart being careless about God, the tongue gets a liberty; and when it is set on the run, and has got a confirmed custom, it turns just natural: so that many swearers are never aware till they profane the name of God, and hardly know when they have done it, that it is so. But God will not let wickedness go free, because it is confirmed by custom.

7. Swearing proceeds from unwatchfulness. Men let their tongues go at random. Hence oaths fly out ere they be aware.

8. *Lastly*, In some it proceeds from a piece of vanity and hellish bravery. They will swear, that others may see what a fine sort of people they are, who regard not the laws of God, nor their offence of good men.

*Secondly*, I come to shew whence it is that profaners of the name of God escape punishment from men.

1. Because of the little zeal there is for the honour of God's name in the world. These things strike not so much against our neighbour's good name, life, or goods, as direct-

ly against the honour of God. If they stretched their injury that way against men, men would avenge it as their own interest; but, alas! the interest of God's honour is the interest of few people.

2. As the laws of men cannot reach many abuses of God's name, so as for those made against common swearing, they are in affect but a mock, in regard of the little tenderness that way found among those that should execute the laws, who are guilty themselves, or have no zeal to put them in execution. Nay, alas! often we see men are obliged by authority to profane the name of God, by taking unlawful, unnecessary oaths.

*Thirdly*, I proceed to shew how God will not let men escape with it; that he will by no means hold them guiltless. Consider that the profaning of the name of God is a sin,

1. That brings wrath upon a land, Hos. iv. 1, 2. Jer. v: 7, 9. Abusers of the name of God are a burden to his spirit, and to the spirits of his people, and make the land mourn, Jer. xxiii. 10. And as every one ought to contribute their assistance to the quenching of a fire that breaks out in a house, so should every one to reformation in this point, while there are so many tongues set on fire of hell, that threaten to fire the nations with a fire of God's wrath.

2. It brings wrath upon families, Zech. v. 3, 4. It provokes God to root out families from the earth; for it brings a curse that a house cannot long stand under. O! then, masters of families, do not ruin your families by this; and take heed to your children and servants, that are given to this sin, as to those who would pull down your house about your ears. Many times things go wrong, they do not thrive; which is not for want of diligence; they wonder how it comes to pass; but there is even a secret curse from the Lord on families for this and other sins, that consumes all, Jer. xxiii. 10.

3. It brings a curse upon particular persons God punishes this sin,

(1.) By strokes upon the body, Deut. xxviii. 58, 59. And remarkable has the sin of some profaners of God's name been written in their punishment, while the sin of profaning that sacred name has been as remarkably written on the miserable case of their mouths and tongues, as ever the adul-



teress's has been on the belly swelling, and thigh rotting. For there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

(2.) By strokes on their souls. It is a heavy word, *God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain*. It imports,

[1.] That however men overlook and forget these things, God writes them down guilty on every such fact. There is a book of remembrance written with God, whereby none of them all shall be lost. The sinner affronts God and his holy name; but though he packs up the affront for the time, he does not forget it.

[2.] God will call the man to a reckoning for them sooner or later, Jude 15. Though they may pass without a challenge for the time, the time will come that they will get deep challenges for these things, either in mercy or in wrath. Their words shall some time lie as a talent of lead on their consciences, which now they think light of; and shall pierce their hearts as swords.

[3.] However lightly men may look on these things, the guilt of them shall once be wreathed about their necks; and the man shall see to read his own sentence of condemnation for them, under which he must either die, or be released by the Mediator's satisfaction and intercession. They have profaned God's name, and God will have the indignity offered to his honour wiped off, either by the satisfaction of the sinner, or his cautioner, whom he must produce.

[4.] If ever the sinner be pardoned, as his profaning the holy name shall stick to his conscience in a particular manner when once awakened, so after the pardon, it shall make him go with a bowed down back, as it did Paul, 1 Tim. i. 13.

[5.] *Lastly*, If he be not pardoned, the wrath of God in hell shall lie upon him, Rom. ii. 5. and it shall be more severely punished there than many other sins. The man's sin shall continue with him through the ages of eternity, while the violence of his torments shall make him blaspheme for ever.

*Fourthly*, It may be asked, What is the great evil of this sin, that it is so severely punished?

1. It is a sin that is directly against God, his glorious greatness and infinite majesty. That name is dreadful which

men profane, Mal. i. ult. The angels adore it, the devils tremble at it; and should vile worms of the earth profane it at every turn? Sins of the second table strike directly against men, but this is one of those that go out immediately against the Majesty of Heaven. And of this sort is the unpardonable sin, which, as I observed before, belongs to this command, Psal. lxxiii. 9.

2. It is a direct violation of the law of God, *Swear not at all; Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* Have you no respect to the authority of God? Consider, I pray you, (1.) Who gave you a tongue and a faculty of speaking? Was it not God? Might he not have prevented this by making you naturally dumb, as many are? (2.) For what end he gave it. Was it not for his glory? and will ye use it against him to dishonour? He thereby differentiated you from a beast; and will you make yourself like a devil? Now, if he gave it you, might he not set laws for the use of it to his glory?

3. It is not only a violation of the law of God, but a breach of men's laws. Swearing has been punished by many nations. With the Scythians, the swearer's punishment was the loss of his estate; with the Persians, bondage; with the Grecians, cutting off the ears; with the Romans, throwing down a steep rock. And the laws of our land are against it, though it is the crying sin of our magistrates, that they are not put in execution. But God is mocked that way, and it is the sin of the people that do not press them to their duty, and inform them.

4. It is a sin that has a peculiar contempt of God in it, striking most directly against his honour, Psal. cxxxix. 20. His name is dreadful, and it is that wherein he has displayed his glorious name unto men: to prostitute and abuse it, then, must needs bear a horrible contempt of God in it. It is a proclaiming of our slighting him, and doing what we can to cause that no regard be had to him in the world.

5. It is most directly contrary to the great end of all divine revelation. The first petition in the Lord's prayer is, 'Hallowed be thy name.' This should be our chief design in all things; for it is God's own design to which all others are subservient, whether in nature or grace. And this flies directly in the face of it, and cannot but be a most heinous sin.

6. It has a particular malignity in it, and in a most special manner proceeds from the devil, as it has less to carry us to it than other ordinary sins have.

(1.) What profit is their in it? The thief gets something for his pains, and the drunkard, a bellyfull; but what gets the swearer? Other sinners serve the devil for pay; but swearers are volunteers, that get no reward. What fruit does it bring you, but the abhorrence of serious persons, and the fearful judgments of God.

(2.) What pleasure is in it; The unclean person gets no profit, but a sordid pleasure by his sin; but which of your senses does swearing gratify? If people were minded to give up themselves to all manner of sensuality, yet there is so little that can be strained from this sin, that unless they be resolved to do the devil a pleasure, they might forbear this sin. Love to that sin, then, must be a love to it for itself, a pure devilish love, without the smallest prospect of pleasure or profit by it. And if men will thus court their own damnation, it is pity they be balked of the lowest place in hell, and the highest room among the servants of the devil, who will serve him just because they will serve him.

(3.) Can any say it is the sin of his constitution; We have heard of a covetous, envious, lustful, passionate, &c. constitution, but of a swearing constitution never. Is any man born with it? does the constitution of our bodies incline us to it? In many other sins the body drags the soul; but here the soul, contrary to all God's commands, makes the body its slave, and turns up the tongue against the heavens.

7. Common swearers and cursers, will be found to be men either of consciences already seared, or next door to it. And I would say, (1.) Knew ye ever a tender exercised Christian an ordinary swearer? I believe ye will find it as hard to find a saint a common swearer, as a common drunkard or whoremonger. It is hard to say it is a spot of God's children. (2.) It hath been known, that very wicked and loose men, who have given up to sensuality and voluptuousness, have had a dreadful horror of profane swearing; the little natural conscience that was left them startling at the profanation of that dreadful name. (3.) It is seldom found that those do reform. Many are very extravagant otherwise in their youth, that afterwards take up themselves; but oft-times swearing grows grey headed with men. (4.) Is it not often seen come



to that, they never know till the oath be belched out; yea, some will swear, and know not they are swearing; nay, they will swear that they are not swearing. Whence can this proceed but from a seared conscience?

8. Swearing looks like hell upon earth. I said before that there is no advantage by swearing: But now I must say that they will have this advantage, that their works will go with them to the bottomless pit. The whoremonger will not get his whores there, nor the drunkard his cups, nor the covetous man his money; but the swearer and curser will still drive on his old trade, and that with improvement, through all eternity. I had once the unhappiness to hear a great swearer, who had often been reproved and admonished, say, he would curse and swear in hell through all eternity. I thought it might be a prophecy. But why should men take the trade of the damned over their head on earth? will not an eternity be long enough to give people their fill of profaning and blaspheming the name of God, and cursing? Why need they begin so soon? there is time enough afterwards. I know nothing on earth so like a damned soul in hell, as a curser or swearer, under bodily pains and despair. And some have been seen to die as they lived, cursing and swearing out their dying breath, to the astonishment of beholders. And if such men should happen to leave the world in the rage of a fever, as many do die raving, it will be a wonder if they die not therein.

I shall conclude all with a very short word of improvement.

1. How can these lands escape a stroke that have so much of this guilt to answer for? Can we think that God will hold nations guiltless, that have come under national perjuries in violating lawful oaths for reformation, that over and over many times have been involving themselves in sinful unlawful oaths contrary to the truth, besides all the execrable oaths and blasphemies vented by a profane generation that have cast off all fear, and that profanation of the holy name, by cursing, swearing, and profaning of holy ordinances, chargeable upon us?

2. I warn all gross profaners of the name of God to repent, and flee to the blood of Christ for pardon; certifying, that if ye do not, ye shall lie under the wrath of God for ever,

and that unruly tongue of your's shall cast you into a burning fever in hell, where you shall not have a drop of water to cool your tongue. Have pity on your souls, have pity on the land, and your families, if ye have any. Pity the rising generation. Is it not sad to think of young ones learning to curse and swear as they learn to speak? Where do they learn these things but at home, or from other children that learn them at home? The blood of their souls will lie at your doors, if they follow your steps; and if God pluck them as brands out of the burning, no thanks to their parents, who do what in them lies by their example to ruin them. Say not, ye reprove them, and do not allow them in it; for an ill example will destroy what ye build by your good advice\*.

3. Let us endeavour not only to reform ourselves, but contribute to the reformation of others in this point. It is Cain's language, unbecoming a Christian, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' In several places and nations there are societies for reformation of manners. And were there but one in a family that had the courage to speak a word for God, to reprove sin, what good might it do, the work being managed with calmness and love? To neglect this duty is injurious to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. But some may object, Our reproofs will do no good, we may as well hold our tongue. I answer, Be ye in your duty, and leave the event to God. Your duty ye have laid before you, Mat. xviii, 15.—

17. 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if ye shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect or hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.' Habitual profane swearers, are surely more offensive to God and good men, than those who are guilty of a single act of fornication, Lev. v. 1. Tell these things to your neighbours that lie at home unnecessarily on the Lord's day. None are more likely to be guilty of these things than such. Be so kind to their souls as

\* Some pleas and pretences that sinners offer in apology for swearing, may be seen satisfyingly answered in the author's book, lately published, entitled, *The distinguishing characters of true believers*, title, *A caveat against profane swearing*, p. 197. &c.

to let them know, that if they continue in these things, what has been said here against them, seeing they were obliged to have come and heard our message from the Lord, shall witness against them at the great day as well as against those who have heard the same, if they continue in such courses. I shall close this with that word, Deut. xxviii. 58, 59. ‘If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law, that are written in this book, that thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.’ And O that all oaths, gross or minced, all profaning of the name of God, and irreverent use of it, and all cursing of whatever kind, might end with these sermons against it!

4. Let us all see ourselves in the glass of this command and threatening, and learn to know our guilt with respect to it, and our danger thereby. God will let us know, sooner or later, that he thinks much of what we think very little of. And let us be humbled under, and wash in Christ’s blood for our sins in taking God’s name in vain\*.

\* Advices to common swearers may be seen, and read with profit, in the author’s *Caveat against profane swearing*, in his *distinguishing characters of true believers*, p. 202. &c.



## OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 8, 9, 10, 11.—*Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*

**T**HIS command respects the time of worship, and is the last of the first table, set to join both together, the Sabbath being the bond of all religion. In the words we have,

1. The command. It is delivered two ways.

1<sup>st</sup> Positively, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.* Sabbath signifies rest or cessation from labour. There is a threefold rest or Sabbath spoken of in scripture. (1.) Temporal (2.) Spiritual, which is an internal soul-rest, in ceasing from sin, Heb. iv. 3. (3.) Eternal, Heb. iv. 9, 11. celebrated in heaven, where the saints rest from their labours. It is the first of these, the weekly Sabbath, that is here meant. Observe here,

(1.) Our duty with respect to the Sabbath. It *is to keep it holy*. God has made it holy, set it apart for holy exercises, and we must keep it holy, spending it in holy exercises.

(2.) The quantity of time to be observed as a Sabbath of rest, a day, a whole day of twenty-four hours; and the one day in seven. They must observe a seventh day after six days labour, wherein all our work must be done, put by hand, so as nothing of it may remain to be done on the Sabbath.

(3.) A note of remembrance put upon it; which imports, that this precept should be diligently observed, special regard paid to it, and due honour put upon this sacred day.

2<sup>dly</sup>, Negatively. Where observe, (1.) What is forbidden here; the doing of any work that may hinder the

sanctifying of this day. (2.) To whom the command is directed, and who must observe it ; magistrates, to whom belong the gates of the city ; and masters of families, to whom belong the gates of the house. They must observe it themselves, and cause others to observe it.

2. The reasons annexed to this command. None of the commands are thus delivered, both positively, and negatively, as this is. And that imports,

1st, God is in a special manner concerned for the keeping of the Sabbath, it being that on which all religion depends. Accordingly, as it is observed or disregarded, so it readily goes with the other parts of religion.

2dly, People are most ready to halve the service of this day, either to look on resting from labour as sufficient, or to look on the work of the day as over when the public work is over.

3dly, There is less light of nature for this command than the rest: for though it is naturally moral that there should be a Sabbath; yet it is but positively moral that this should be one day in seven, depending entirely on the will of God.

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall shew,

- I. What is required in the fourth commandment.
- II. Which day of the seven God hath appointed to be the weekly Sabbath.
- III. How the Sabbath is to be sanctified.
- IV. What is forbidden in this command.
- V. The reasons annexed to it.
- VI. Make improvement.

I. I am to shew what is required in the fourth commandment. This command according to our Catechism, requireth 'the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word ; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.'

Here I shall shew,

1. That this command requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word.
2. That it requires one day in seven to be kept as a holy Sabbath to the Lord.
3. That the day to be kept holy is one whole day.

*First*, I am to shew, that this command requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word.

The Jews under the old Testament had several days beside the weekly Sabbath, that by divine appointment were to be kept as holy days, and by virtue of this command they were to observe them, even as by virtue of the second they were to observe the sacrifices and other parts of the Old Testament instituted worship. But these days are taken away under the gospel by the coming of Christ.

But that which this command in the first place requires, is the keeping holy of a Sabbath to God ; whatever be the day God determines for it ; whether the seventh in order from the creation, as under the Old Testament, or the first, as under the New. And so the command is, *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy* ; not, *Remember the seventh day*. Thus the keeping of a Sabbath is moral duty binding all persons in all places of the world.

For it is moral duty, and by the natural law required, that as God is to be worshipped, not only internally, but externally, not only privately, but publicly ; so there must be some special time designed and set apart for this, without which it cannot be done. And so the very Pagans had their sabbaths and holidays. This is the first thing imported here, That a Sabbath is to be kept.

Another thing imported here is, That it belongs to God to determine the Sabbath, or what day or days he will have to be kept holy. He says not, *Remember to keep holy a Sabbath-day*, or a day of rest, leaving it to men what days shall be holy, and what not ; but, *Remember the Sabbath-day*, &c. supposing the day to be already determined by himself. So that we are bound to set time appointed in his word.

And this condemns mens taking on themselves, whether churches or states, to appoint holidays to be kept, which God has not appointed in his word. Consider,

1. This command puts a peculiar honour on the Sabbath above all other days *Remember the Sabbath-day*, &c. But when men make holidays of their own to be kept holy, the day appointed of God is spoiled of its peculiar honour, and there is no peculiar honour left to it, Ezek xliii. 8. Yea, in



practice they go before it; for men's holidays, where they are regarded, are more regarded than God's day.

2. This command says, *Six days shalt thou labour*. Formalists say, There are many of these six days thou shalt not labour, for they are holy days. If these words contain a command, who can countermand it? if but a permission, who can take away that liberty which God has left us? As for fast-days or thanksgiving days occasionally appointed, they are not holy days; the worship is not made to wait on the days, as on Sabbaths and holidays, but the days on the worship which God by his providence requires; and consequently there must be a time for performing these exercises.

3. It belongs only to God to make a holy day; for who can sanctify a creature but the Creator, or time but the Lord of time; He only can give the blessing: why should they then sanctify a day that cannot bless it? The Lord abhors holy days devised out of men's own hearts, 2 Kings xii. 33.

4. *Lastly*, What reason is there to think that when God has taken away from the church's neck a great many holy days appointed by himself, he has left the gospel-church to be burdened with as many, nay, and more of men's invention, than he himself had appointed?

*Secondly*, This command requires one day in seven to be kept as a holy Sabbath unto the Lord: *Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*. Thus the Lord determines the quantity of time that is to be his own, in a peculiar manner, that is, the seventh part of our time. After six days working, a seventh is to be a Sabbath. This is moral, binding all persons in all ages, and not a ceremony abrogated by Christ.

1. This command of appointing one day in seven for a Sabbath is one of the commands of that law, consisting of ten commands, which cannot be made out without this was written on tables of stone, to shew the perpetuity of it; and of which Christ says Matth. v. 17, 18, 19. 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be least in the kingdom of hea-

ven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'

2. It was appointed and given of God to Adam in innocence, before there was any ceremony to be taken away by the coming of Christ, Gen. ii. 3.

3. All the reasons annexed to this command are moral, respecting all men, as well as the Jews, to whom the ceremonial law was given. And we find strangers obliged to the observasion of it, as well as the Jews; but they were not so to ceremonial laws.

4. *Lastly*, Jesus Christ speaks of it as a thing perpetually to endure, even after the Jewish Sabbath was over and gone, Matth. xxiv. 20. And so, although the Sabbath of the seventh day in order from the creation was changed into the first day, yet still it was kept a seventh day.

*Thirdly*, The day to be kept holy, is one whole day. Not a few hours, while the public worship lasts, but a whole day. There is an artificial day betwixt sun-rising and sun-setting, John xi. 9. and a natural day of twenty-four hours, Gen. i. which is the day here meant. This day we begin in the morning immediately after midnight; and so does the Sabbath begin, and not in the evening; as is clear, if ye consider,

1. John xx. 19. 'The same day at evening, being the first day of the week:' where ye see that the evening following, not going before this first day of the week, is called the evening of the first day.

2. Our Sabbath begins where the Jewish Sabbath ended; but the Jewish Sabbath did not end towards the evening, but towards the morning, Matth. xxviii. 1. 'In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week,' &c.

3. Our Sabbath is held in memory of Christ's resurrection, and it is certain that Christ rose early in the morning of the first day of the week.

Let us therefore take the utmost care to give God the whole day, spending it in the manner he has appointed, and not look on all the time, besides what is spent in public worship, as our own; which is too much the case in these degenerate times wherein we live.

II. I come now to shew which day of the seventh God hath

appointed to be the weekly Sabbath. According to our Catechism, ‘ From the beginning of the world, to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.’

We have heard that this command requires a Sabbath to be kept, and that one whole day in seven; we are now to consider what day that is. The scripture teaches us, that there are two days which have by divine appointment had this honour, the seventh day, and the first day of the week.

*First*, As to the seventh day, it is acknowledged by all, that that was the Jewish Sabbath. And concerning it, consider,

1. Who appointed the seventh day, to be the Sabbath. It was God himself that appointed the seventh, which is the last day of the week, by us called Saturday, to be the Sabbath; *The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* He that was the Lord of time made this designation of the time at first,

2. Wherefore did God at first appoint the seventh? The reason of this was, that as God rested that day from all his works of creation, men might, after his example, rest on that day from their own works, that they might remember his, and celebrate the praises of the Creator. *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,—and rested the seventh day.* The work of creation was performed in the six days, and nothing was made on the seventh day; so that the first new day that man saw was a holy day, a Sabbath, that he might know the great end of his creation was to serve the Lord.

3. How long did that appointment of the seventh day last? To the resurrection of Christ. This was its last period, at which time it was to give place to a new institution, as will afterwards appear. The day of Christ’s resurrection was the day of the finishing of the new creation, the restoration of a marred world.

4. When was the Sabbath of the seventh day appointed first? Some who detract from the honour of the Sabbath, contend that it was not appointed till the promulgating of the law on mount Sinai, and that its first institution was in



the wilderness. We hold that it was appointed from the beginning of the world. For proof whereof consider,

(1.) Moses tells us plainly, that God, immediately after perfecting of the works of creation, blessed and hallowed the seventh day, Gen. ii. 2, 3. Now, how could it be blessed and hallowed but by an appointing of it to be the Sabbath, setting it apart from common works, to the work of God's solemn worship? The words run on in a continued history, without the least shadow of anticipating, upwards of two thousand years, as some would have it.

(2.) The Sabbath of the seventh day was observed before the promulgation of the law from Sinai, and is spoke of Exod. xvi. not as a new, but an ancient institution. So, ver. 5. preparation for the Sabbath is called for, before any mention of it is made, clearly importing that it was known before. See ver. 23. where the Sabbath is given for a reason why they should prepare the double quantity of manna on the sixth day; which says that solemn day had not its institution then first. And the breach of the Sabbath is, ver. 28. exposed as the violating of a law formerly given.

(3.) In the fourth command they are called to remember the Sabbath-day, as a day that was not then first appointed but had been appointed before, although it had gone out of use, and had been much forgotten when they were in Egypt. Besides, the reasons of this command, God's resting the seventh day, and blessing and hallowing it, being from the beginning of the world, say, that the law had then place when the reason of the law took place.

(4.) This is evident from Heb. iv. 3,—9. The apostle there proves, that there remains a Sabbath, or rest to the people of God, into which they are to enter by faith, from this, that the scripture speaks only of three sabbatisms or rests; one after the works of creation, another after the coming into Canaan; and David's words cannot be understood of the first, for that was over, ver. 3. and so was the other; therefore there remaineth a rest for the people of God, ver. 9.

Some allege against this, that the patriarchs did not observe the Sabbath, because there was no mention made of it in the scriptures. But this is no just prejudice; for at that rate we might as well conclude it was not observed all the time of the judges, Samuel and Saul; for it is no where re-

corded in that history that they did. Yea, though the patriarchs had not observed it, yet that could no more militate against the first institution, than their polygamy against the first institution of marriage. But as from the patriarchs sacrificing, we infer the divine appointment of sacrifice, so from the institution of the Sabbath, we may infer their keeping it. And their counting by weeks, as Noah did, Gen. viii. 10, 12; and Laban with Jacob, Gen. xxix. 27, 28, doth not obscurely shew it; for to what end did they use this computation, but that the Sabbath might be distinguished from other days? And the piety of the patriarchs persuades us, that they observed that solemn day for worship; and if any day, what but that designed of God?

*Secondly,* As to the Sabbath of the first day of the week,

1. Consider the date of it, which was from the resurrection of Christ, to continue to the end of the world; for the days of the gospel are the last days.

2. How the Sabbath could be changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The fourth command holds out a Sabbath to be kept, and that one in seven. As for the designation of the day, he that designed one, could design another; and the substituting of a new day is the repealing of the old.

3. Wherefore this change was made. Upon the account of the resurrection of Christ, wherein the work of man's redemption was completed.

4. By what authority it was changed into the first day. The Sabbath was by divine authority changed from the seventh to the first day of the week; so that the Lord's day is now by divine appointment the Christian Sabbath.

(1.) The Sabbath of the first day of the week is prophesied of under the Old Testament, Psal. cxviii. 24. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made,' viz. the day of Christ's resurrection, when the stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner. 'We will rejoice and be glad in it;' that is, we will celebrate it as a day of rejoicing and thankfulness for the work of redemption. Compare Acts iv. 10, 11. 'Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is

become the head of the corner.' Hereto possibly may that passage be referred, Ezek. xliii. 27. 'And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the EIGHTH DAY, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord.' And it may be called the *eighth day*, because the first day of the week now is the eighth in order from the creation. As also Isa. xi. 10. 'His rest shall be glorious.' As the Father's rest from the work of creation was glorious by the seventh day's rest, so the rest of the Son from the work of redemption was glorious by the first days rest. On this day it was that the light was formed; so on this day did Christ the Sun of righteousness, the true light, arise from the dark mansions of the grave with resplendent glory.

(2.) This day is called 'the Lords day,' Rev. i. 10. That this Lord's day is the first day of the week, is clear, if ye consider, that John speaks of this day as a known day among Christians by that name. It could not be the Jewish Sabbath, for that is always called the Sabbath, and the Jewish Sabbaths were then repealed, Col. ii. 16. Neither could it mean any other day of the week, wherein Christ specially manifested himself, for that would determine no day at all. And that this phrase infers a divine institution, is evident from the like phrase of the sacrament called *the Lord's supper*.

(3.) It is evident there ought be a Sabbath, and that from the creation till Christ's resurrection the seventh day in order was appointed by God himself. It is no less evident, that the Sabbath is changed to the first day of the week, and that lawfully, because the Jewish Sabbath is repealed. Now, who could lawfully make this change but one who had divine authority? who therefore is called Lord of the Sabbath, Mark ii. 28.

(4.) It was the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians to observe the first day of the week for the Sabbath, John xx. 19. Acts xx. 7. On this day the collection for the poor was made, 1 Cor xvi. 2. and you know the apostles had from Christ what they delivered to the churches as to ordinances, 1 Cor. xi. 23.

5. *Lastly*, The Lord, by glorious displays of his grace and Spirit, has remarkably honoured this day, in all ages of the church; and by signal strokes from heaven has vindicated



cated the honour of this day on the profaners of it. Of this remarkable instances may be seen in history, both at home and abroad.

Let us therefore sanctify this day, as the day which God hath appointed, and blessed as a day of sacred rest in the Christian church.

III. I come now to shew you how the Sabbath is to be sanctified. The Catechism tells us, "It is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

Here I shall shew, what it is to sanctify the Sabbath, and what are the parts of the sanctification of it.

FIRST, I am to shew, what it is to sanctify the Sabbath, The Sabbath-day is not capable of any sanctity or holiness, but what is relative; that is, in respect of its use for holy rest or exercise. So, (1.) God has sanctified that day, by setting it apart for holy uses, designing and appointing it in a special manner for his own worship and service. (2.) Men must sanctify it by keeping it holy, spending that day in God's worship and service for which God has set it apart; using it only for the uses that God has consecrated it unto.

SECONDLY, I come to shew what are the parts of the sanctification of the Sabbath. They are two; holy rest, and holy exercise.

*First*, The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy rest. Therefore it is called *a sabbath*, i. e. a rest.

1. What are we to rest from? On the Sabbath we must rest.

1st, From our worldly employments. God has given us six days for these; but his day must be kept free of them: *In it thou shalt not do any work.* The works of our worldly calling have six days, those of our heavenly calling but one. We must rest from the former, that we may apply ourselves to the latter. Now, such works are to be accounted,

(1.) All handy-labour or servile employments tending to our worldly gain, as on other days of the week, as ploughing and sowing, bearing of burdens, &c. Neh. xiii. 15. driv-

ing of beasts to market, or exercising any part of one's calling.

(2.) All study of liberal arts and sciences. The Sabbath is not a day for such exercises, as the reading of history, the studying of sciences, &c. Isa. lviii. 13.

(3.) All civil works, such as making of bargains, unnecessary journeying travelling to Monday markets on the Lord's day, though people wait on sermons, or take them by the way. It is indeed the sin of those that do not change their market-days when they so fall out, and a sin in the government to suffer it: but that will not justify those who comply with the temptation, seeing God hath given us other days of the week. If they cannot overtake their market after the Sabbath, they should go away before, that they may rest on the Sabbath, wherever they are, Exod. xvi. 29.

*2dly*, From all worldly recreations, though lawful on other days. It is not a day for carnal pleasures of any sort, more than for worldly employments. Our delights should be heavenly this day, not to please the flesh but the spirit; and sports, plays, and pastimes, are a gross profanation of the Sabbath, Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

Now, this rest of the Sabbath from these must be,

(1.) A rest of the hands from them. The hands must rest, that the heart may be duly exercised.

(2.) A rest of the tongue. People should not give their orders for the week's work on the Lord's day, nor converse about their worldly business.

(3.) A rest of the head from thinking of it, and forming plans and contrivances about worldly affairs.

But here are accepted works of two sorts.

1. Works of necessity, as to quench a house on fire, &c.
2. Works of mercy, as to save the life of a beast; see Matth. xii. Under which may be comprehended, (1.) Good works, such as visiting the sick, relieving the poor, &c. (2.) Works of decency, such as dressing the body with comely attire. (3.) Works of common honesty and humanity, as saluting one another, 1 Pet. iii. 8. (4.) Works of necessary refreshment, as dressing and taking of meat. (5.) Works having a necessary connection with and tendency to the worship of God, as travelling on the Lord's day to sermons, 2 Kings iv. 23.

But in all these things it should be regarded, that the ne-

cessity be real, and not pretended : for it is not enough that the work cannot be done to such advantage on another day; for that might let out people on the Sabbath, if it be a windy day or so, to cut down their corns, whom yet God has in a special manner provided against, *Exod. xxxiv. 21*; and that would have justified the sellers of fish, whom Nehemiah discharged, *Neh. xiii. 16, 17*. And therefore I cannot think that the making of cheese on the Lord's day can be counted a work of necessity, lawful on that day: for as much might be said in the other cases as can be said in this, viz. that the corn may shake, the fishes spoil, &c. Besides, people should take heed that they bring not that necessity on themselves, by timeously providing to prevent it. And when works of real necessity and mercy are to be done, they should be done, not with a work-day's, but Sabbath-day's frame.

2. Who are to rest? The command is very particular. (1.) Men. [1.] The heads of the family, the heads of the state, master and mistress, are to give example to others. [2.] The children, *son, daughter*; they must not have their liberty to profane the Sabbath by playing more than working. [3.] Servants, whose toil all the week may tempt them to mispend the Lord's day; they must not be bidden profane the Sabbath; and if they be, they must obey God rather than man. [4.] The stranger must not be allowed his liberty: we must not compliment away the honour of the Sabbath. (2.) Beasts; they must rest; not that the law reaches them for themselves, but for their owners; either because they require attendance at work, or put the case they did not, yet it is the work which must not be done. This lets us see, that where even their work may be carried on, on the Lord's day without attendance on them, yet it is not to be done.

3. What makes the rest holy? Respect to the command of God.

*Secondly*, The Sabbath is to be sanctified by holy exercise.

1. Public exercise; of God's worship, *Isa. lxvi. 23*; as hearing sermons, *Luke iv. 16*; prayer, *Acts xvi. 13, 14*; receiving of the sacraments, where there is occasion, *Acts xx 7*; singing of Psalms, *Psal. xcii. title*.

2. Private exercises of worship, alone and in our families,



Lev. xxiii. 3. Neither of these must jumble out the other. God has joined them; let us not put them asunder.

And these duties are to be done with a special elevation of heart on the Sabbath-day; they ought to be performed with a frame suiting the Sabbath, Is. lviii. 13.

1st, Grace must be stirred up to exercise, otherwise the Sabbath will be a burden. Grace will be at its height in heaven, and the Sabbath is an emblem of heaven, Rev. i. 10.

2dly, The heart should be withdrawn from all earthly things, and intent upon the duty of the day. We must leave the ass at the foot of the mount, that we may converse with God,

3dly, Love and admiration are special ingredients here. The two great works of creation and redemption, which we are particularly called to mind on the Lord's day, are calculated to excite our love and admiration.

4thly, We should have a peculiar delight in the day, and the duties of it, exchanging our lawful pleasures on other days with spiritual pleasures on this.

The rest without holy exercise is not sufficient.

1. The Sabbath-rest resembles that of heaven, which is a rest without a rest, wherein the soul is most busy and active, serving the Lord without weariness.

2. If it were enough, we were obliged to sanctify the Sabbath no more than beasts, who only rest that day.

3. The rest enjoined is not commanded for itself, but for the holy exercises of the day.

Now, it is the whole day that is thus to be spent, i. e. the natural day. Not that people are bound to be in these exercises without intermission all the twenty-four hours; for God has not made the Sabbath to be a burden to man, but that we should continue God's work as we do our own on other days, where we are allowed necessary rest and refreshment by sleep in the night.

*Use.* Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. This note is put upon it.

1. Because of the great weight of the thing, the Sabbath being the bond of all religion. It is God's deal-day, wherein his people may expect furniture for all the week.

2. Because we are very apt to forget it, Ezek. xxii. 26. There is less light of nature for this than other commands. It restrains our liberty in those things that we do all the week.

And Satan, knowing the importance of it for our souls, that it is a day of blessing, sets on us to forget it. If ye would then sanctify the Sabbath,

(1.) Remember it before it come; on the last day of the week, on the Saturday's evening, laying by work timeously to prepare for it, Luke xxiii. 54.

(2.) Remember it when it is come; rise early on the Sabbath-morning, Psal. xcii. 2. The morning hath enough ado: worship God secretly and privately: prepare yourselves for ordinances, wrestle with God for his presence thereto, that he may graciously assist the minister in preaching, and you in hearing, and may bless the word to you. Remember it while it is going on, that it is God's day, a day of blessing, and ply diligently the work of the day, not only in time of the public work, but after, till the day be finished.

(3.) Remember it when it is over, to see what good you have got by it; to bless him for any smiles of his face, or manifestations of his grace; and to mourn over your failures, and apply to the blood of Christ for pardon and cleansing.

IV. I proceed to shew, what is forbidden in the fourth commandment. We are told in the Catechism, that it 'forbiddeth the omission or careless performanee of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations.'

There are five ways how this commandment is broken.

*First*, By omission of the duties required on this day, whether in whole or in part. Many of the Sabbath-duties are the duties of every day; but the omission of them, which is always criminal, is more so on this day, because on it we are specially called to them. We sin against this command, then, when we neglect the public or private exercises of God's worship.

1. Not remembering the Sabbath, before it come, to prepare for it; entertaining a carnal worldly frame of spirit on the night before, not laying aside work betimes, and composing our hearts for the approaching Sabbath far more when people continue at their work later that night than ordinary, getting as near the borders of the Sabbath as they can.

2. Neglecting the duties of the Sabbath-morning; particularly,

1. The duty of meditation. Those that are in the spirit on the Lord's day, their spirits will be busy, elevated to heavenly things, and conversing with heaven. The two great works of creation and redemption require our thoughts particularly on that day, Psal. xcii. 5; and we must needs be guilty, when, while God has set these great marks before us, we do not aim to hit them. Has not God made it a day of blessing? should not we then consider our wants, miseries, and needs, and sharpen our appetites after that food that is set before us in ordinances on that day?

(2.) Secret prayer. The Sabbath-morning is a special time for wrestling with God, confessing, petitioning, and giving thanks. Then should there be wrestling for the blessing on the day of blessing. And the neglect of it is a very bad beginning for that good day. When will they come to God's door that will not come then? Psal. xcii. 1, 2.

(3.) Family-exercise. This command has a special respect to family-religion: As God will have the family to mind and see to their own work on the six days, so he calls them to mind his together on the Sabbath. Every family is to be at church, especially on the Lord's day. And if people came with their hearts warmed from family-duties to the public, they would speed.

3. Neglect of the public exercises of God's worship, Heb. x. 25. By this neglect the Sabbath is profaned. The public ordinances on the Lord's day, whatever they do else, they keep up a standard for Christ in the world; and to slight them is the way to fill the world with atheism and profaneness. As it would be the sin of ministers not to administer them, so it is the sin of people not to attend on them. But O how does this profanation abound, by unnecessary absenting from public ordinances! It is not enough to spend the time in private. God requires both; and the one must not jumble out the other. Nothing should be admitted as an excuse in this, but what will bear weight when the conscience is sisted before God.

4. Neglecting the duties of the day when the public work is over. The Sabbath is not over when the public work is over. When we go home to our houses, we must keep the Sabbath there too, Lev. xxiii. 3. It ought not to be an idle time. Ye ought to retire by yourselves, and meditate on what ye have heard, on your behaviour at the public or-



dinances, and be humbled for your failings ; confer together about the word, renew your calling on God in secret, and in your families, and with variety of holy exercises spend what remains of the day.

*Secondly*, The Sabbath is profaned by a careless performance of the duties required. Though we perform the duties themselves, we may profane the Sabbath by the way of managing them. Now, it is a careless performance to perform them,

1. Hypocritically, Matth. xv. 7. while the body is exercised in Sabbath's work, but the heart goes not along with it.

2. Carnally, in an earthly frame of spirit, the heart nothing savouring of heaven, but still of the world. Hence are so many distracting thoughts about worldly things, that the heart cannot be intent on the duty of the day, Amos viii. 5.

2. Heartlessly and coldly. The Sabbath should be called a delight ; a special vigour and alacrity is required to Sabbath-duties. But O how flat, heartless, dead, and dull are we for the most part ! so that many are quite out of their element on the Lord's day, and never come to themselves, or any alacrity of spirit, till the Sabbath be over, and they return to their business.

4. To perform them with a weariness of them, or in them, Mal. i. 13. Alas ! is not the Sabbath the most wearisome day of all the week to many ? The rest of the Sabbath is more burdensome than the toil of other days. How will such take with heaven, where there is an eternal rest, an everlasting Sabbath ? This is a contempt of God and of his day.

*Thirdly*, The Sabbath is profaned by idleness. God has made the Sabbath a rest, but not a mere rest. He never allows idleness : on the week-days we must not be idle, or we mispend our own time. On the Lord's day we must not be idle, or we mispend and profane God's time. Thus the Sabbath is idled away and profaned.

1. By unnecessary unseasonable sleeping in that day ; lying long in the Sabbath-morning, going soon to bed that night, to cut God's day as short as may be ; and much more sleeping in any other time of the day, to put off the time.

2. By vain gadding abroad on the Lord's day, through the fields, or gathering together about the doors, to idle away the time in company, It is very necessary that people keep

within doors on the Lord's day as much as may be ; and if necessity or conveniency call them forth, that they carry their Sabbath's work with them.

3. By vain and idle discourse or thoughts. We must give an account of every idle word spoken on any day, far more for those spoken on the Lord's day, which are doubly sinful.

*Fourthly*, The Sabbath is profaned by doing that which is in itself sinful. To do those things on the Lord's day that ought not to be done any day, is a sin highly aggravated. Thus the Sabbath is profaned by people's discouraging others from attending ordinances, instead of attending them themselves ; swearing or cursing on that day, instead of praising God. The better the day, the worse is the deed. How fearful must their doom be who wait that time for their wicked pranks, as some dishonest servants, and other naughty persons, who chuse the time that others are at church for their hidden works of dishonesty ; because then they get most secrecy ? And indeed the devil is very busy that way, and has brought some on to commit such things on the Sabbath-day as have brought them to an ill end.

*Lastly*, By unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations. The Sabbath is profaned,

1. By carnal recreations, nowise necessary nor suitable to the work of the Sabbath ; such as, all carnal pleasures, sports, plays, and pastimes, Isa. lviii. 13.

2. By following of worldly employments on that day, working or going about ordinary business, except in cases of necessity and mercy, Matth. xxiv. 20. Though, where real necessity or mercy is, it is an abuse of that day to forbear such things, as sometimes the Jews did, who being attacked on the Lord's day, would not defend themselves.

3. By unnecessary thoughts or discourse about them ; for that day is a day of rest from them every way ; and we should neither think of nor talk about them.

O let us be deeply humbled before the Lord under the sense of our profanations of the Sabbath ! for who can plead innocent here ? We are all guilty in some shape or other, and had need to flee to the atoning blood of Jesus for the expiation of this and all our other sins.

V. I come now to consider the reasons annexed to the

fourth commandment. And these, according to the Catechism, are, 'God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments; his challenging a special propriety in the seventh; his own example; and his blessing the Sabbath-day.'

This command God has enforced by four reasons,

1. The first reason is taken from the equity of this command. God has allowed us six days of seven for our own business, and has reserved but one for himself. In dividing our time betwixt himself and us, he has made our share great, six for one. Consider the force of this reason.

1st, We have time enough to serve ourselves in the six days, and shall we not serve God on the seventh? They that will not be satisfied with six, would as little be satisfied with sixteen. But carnal-hearts are like a sand-bed to devour that which is holy. Nay,

2dly, We have time enough to tire ourselves on the six days in our own employments; it is a kindness that we are obliged to rest on the Lord's day. Our interest is our duty, and our duty is our interest. It is a kindness to our bodies, and souls too. And shall we not be engaged by it to sanctify the Sabbath?

3dly, There is time enough to raise the appetite for the Sabbath. It comes so seldom, though so sweet to the exercised soul, that we may long for it, and rejoice at the return of it. It is sad if six days interval cannot make us find our stomach.

4thly, God might have allowed us but one day, and taken six to himself. Who could have quarrelled the Lord of time? Has he reserved but one for six, and shall we grudge it him? The sentence of David in the parable against the rich man that took away the poor man's one ewe-lamb, is applicable here: 'The man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold,' &c. 2 Sam. xii.

2. The second reason is taken from God's challenging a special propriety in the Sabbath-day; *But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* All days are his; but this is his in a peculiar manner, Rev. i. 10. He has set a mark on it for himself to be reserved for himself. Consider the force of this reason.

1st, If we have a God, it is reasonable that God should



have a time set apart for his service, *the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*. The heathens had days set apart for the honour of their idols; though the dumb idols could not demand them, yet they gave them. Papists have days set apart for saints, who are to them a sort of gods, though some of them, as Paul has forbidden it. And wilt thou not keep holy the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?

*2dly*, It is sacrilege, the worst of theft, to profane the Sabbath-day. It is a robbing of God, a stealing of time from him that is consecrated to him, and that is dangerous, Prov. xx. 25. We justly blame the churches of Rome and England, for robbing people of a great many days which God has given us; but how may we blame ourselves for robbing God of the day he has kept from us, and taken to himself? Alas! our zeal for God is far below our zeal for ourselves. They stick to their saints days, but how weary are we of our God's days? Mal. iii. 8.

3. The third reason is taken from God's example, who, though he could have perfected the world in a moment, yet, spent six days in it, and but six days, resting the seventh, taking a complacency in the work of his own hand; and this is an example to be imitated by us. Consider the force of this reason.

*1st*. God's example proposed for imitation is a most binding rule, Eph. v. 1. 'Be ye followers of God.' What God does is best done, and we must labour to write after his copy.

*2dly*, The profaning of the Sabbath is a most eminent and signal contempt of God and of his works. Did God rest on the Sabbath, taking a complacency in the six days works? Our not doing so is an undervaluing of what God so highly esteemed, slighting of what he so much prized, and consequently a contempt of himself and his works too.

4. The fourth reason is taken from his blessing the Sabbath-day. His blessing of that day is his blessing it as a mean of blessing us in the keeping of it. It imports,

*1st*, The Lord's putting a peculiar honour on it beyond all other days. It is the 'holy of the Lord and honourable.' The King of heaven has made it the queen of days. Therefore it should be our question. What shall be done to that day the King delighteth to honour? Let us beware of level-

ling that with common things which God hath so far advanced above them.

2dly, That the Lord has set it apart for a spiritual blessing to his people, so that in the sanctification of that day we may look for a blessing, Isa. lvi. 6, 7; nay, that the Lord will multiply his blessings on that day more on his people than any other days wherein they seek it. So that, as the Lord requires more on that day than on any other days, he also gives more.

3dly, That the Lord will make it even a spring of temporal blessings. He will not let the day of blessing be a curse to people in their temporal affairs. They shall be at no loss in their worldly things by the Sabbath rest, Lev. xxv. 20, 22. Conscientious keepers of the Sabbath will be found to thrive as well otherwise as those who are not. The force of this reason is,

(1.) God's honour by keeping of that day, that we may get his blessings on it showered down upon us. So that the profanation of the Sabbath is like profane Esau's rejecting the blessing.

(2.) Our own interest. Is it a special day for blessing, and shall we not observe it? It is an unworthy mistake to look on the Sabbath as so much lost time. No time is so gainful as a Sabbath holily observed. And indeed the great reason of the profaning of the Sabbath may be found to lie,

[1.] In carnality and worldly-mindedness. The Sabbath is no delight to many. Why? Because heaven would be none to them, for they savour not the things of God. The heart that is drowned in the cares or pleasures of the world, all the week over, is as hard to get in a Sabbath-frame, as wet wood to take fire.

[2.] Insensibleness of their need of spiritual blessings. They are not sensible of their wants, and hence they despise the blessing. He that has nothing to buy or sell can stay at home on the market-day, and the full soul cares not for God's day.

[3.] The not believing of the blessing of that day. They that think they may come as good speed any day in the duties of the day as on the Lord's day, no wonder that they count God's day, and the duties of it, as common.

USE. Let me exhort you then to beware of profaning

the Sabbath. Learn to keep it holy. And therefore I would call you here to several duties.

1. Remember the Sabbath-day, before it come, to prepare for it, and let your eye be on it before the week be done. Timeously lay by your worldly employment, and go not near the borders of the Lord's day, and strive to get your hearts in a frame suitable to the exercises of this holy day.

2. Make conscience of attending the public ordinances, and waiting on God in his own house on his own day. Loiter not away the Lord's day at home unnecessarily, seeing the Lord trusts to meet his people there. This will bring leanness to your own souls, and grief of heart to him who bears the Lord's message to you.

3. Before, you come to the public, spend the morning in secret and private exercises, particularly in prayer, reading, and meditation; remembering how much your success depends upon suitable preparation. Put off your shoes before ye tread the holy ground.

4. Make not your attendance on the public ordinances a by-hand work, and a mean for carrying on your worldly affairs. If ye come to the church to meet with some body, and to discourse or make appointments about your worldly business, it will be a wonder if ye meet with the Lord. If ye travel on the Lord's day, and take a preaching by the way, it may well cheat your blinded consciences; it will not be pleasing to God, for it makes his service to stand but in the second room, while your main end is what concerns your temporal affairs. Among the Jews no man might make the mountain of the house, or a synagogue, a thoroughfare. And beware of common discourse between sermons, which is too much practised among professors.

5. When ye come home from the public ordinances, let it be your care, both by the way and at home, to meditate or converse about spiritual things, and what ye have heard. Retire and examine yourselves as to what ye have gained, and be not as the unclean beasts, who chew not the cud. Let masters of families take account of their children and servants how they have profited, catechise and instruct them in the principles of religion, and exhort them to piety.

6. When ye are necessarily detained from the public or-



dinances, let your hearts be there, Psal. lxxiii. 1, 2; and do not turn that to sin which in itself is not your sin. And strive to spend the Lord's day in private and secret worship, looking to the Lord for the upmaking of your wants. As for those that tie themselves to men's service, without a due regard to their having opportunities to hear the Lord's word, their wages are dear bought, and they have little respect to God or their own souls; and I think tender Christians will be loath to engage so. But, alas! few masters or servants look further than the work and wages in their engaging together! A sad argument that religion is at a low ebb.

7. Do not cut the Sabbath short. The church of Rome has half holidays; God never appointed any such; it is one whole day. Alas! it is a sad thing to see how the Lord's day is so consumed, as if people would make up the loss of a day out of Saturday's night and Monday's morning, which they do by cutting short the Lord's day.

8. *Lastly*, Labour to be in a Sabbath-day's frame. Let the thoughts of worldly business, far more worldly words and works, be far from you. To press this, consider,

(1.) It is God's command, whereby he tries your love to him. This day is as the forbidden fruit. Who does not condemn Adam and Eve for eating of it? O do not profane it any manner of way!

(2.) Heaven will be an everlasting Sabbath, and our conversation should be heaven-like. If we grudge the Lord one day in seven, how will we digest in eternity? We are ready to complain that we are toiled with the world: why then do we not enter into his rest?

(3.) The great advantage of sanctifying the Lord's day. He has made it a day of blessing. It is God's deal-day; and keeps up the heart of many through the week while they think of its approach.

(4.) *Lastly*, Ye will bring wrath on you if ye do not sanctify the Sabbath. God may plague you with temporal, spiritual, and eternal plagues. Many begin with this sin of profaning the Lord's day, and it brings them at length to an ill hour, both in this world and that which is to come.

## OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 12.—*Honour thy father and thy mother : that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

**W**E come now to the second table of the law, which teacheth us our duty to man, i. e. to ourselves and others. There are two parts of religion, piety towards God, comprehending our duty to God, immediately delivered in the four first commandments; righteousness, our duty to our neighbour, delivered in the last six. As God has set the four first commands to maintain his own worship and honour in the world; so he has covered man with the last six. The fifth command is a fence for him in his station, whatever it is; the sixth guards his life; the seventh is a fence to his chastity; the eighth, to his goods; the ninth, to his name; and the tenth, to all that is his. Over these hedges no man must break, under the pain of the Lawgiver's displeasure,

Religion must run through the whole course of our conversation, and mix itself with all our actions, those that respect men! as well as those that respect God immediately. Therefore in vain do they pretend to religion, that make no conscience of their duty to men. Religion makes not a man only a good man but a good neighbour. And it is observable, that these duties are ordinarily made the trying point to professors of religion. And if ye have got any good of the late solemn occasion, ye will not only love God more, but love your neighbour more; not only grow in duties of piety towards God, but of righteousness to men, giving every one their due, Micah. vi. 6, 7, 8. Zech. viii. 16, 17. Matth. xix. 18, 19. Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10.

In this passage there is a command, *Honour thy father and thy mother*; and the reason of it, *that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. In the command two things are to be considered.

1. The object, *father and mother*. By these are meant not

only our natural parents, but also all superiors, superiors in age, 1 Tim. v. 1, 2; such as are superior to us in gifts or grace, Gen. iv. 20. and xlv. 8; but especially such as are by God's ordinance over us in authority, whether in the family, as husbands, 2 Sam. xii. 3; masters, 2 Kings v. 13; in the church, as ministers and other church-officers, 2 Kings ii. 12. or in the state, as magistrates, supreme or subordinate, Isa. xlix. 23. These are more directly meant by father and mother who are to be honoured.

These are the objects of this command expressed. The objects implied are,

(1.) All inferiors; that is, not only children, but the younger, the weaker in gifts and grace, wives, servants, people, subjects. That these are also the objects of this command, is clear, if ye consider, that their superiors are called fathers and mothers to them in the command, and consequently it binds them to be as fathers unto them.

2. All equals; that is, brethren, sisters, friends, neighbours, and all amongst whom there is little difference as to age, gifts, grace, place, or dignity. That the command respects these also, is clear if we consider, that Christ sums up the whole second table in that general, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Therefore our neighbour in the general must be the object of this command, as well as of the rest of the second table.

2. The duty, *Honour*, All these must be honoured by their relatives. Giving of honour does not imply the superiority of the person honoured; God himself will honour those that honour him; and all men must be honoured by us, whether they be our superiors, inferiors, or equals, 1 Pet. ii. 17. God has put some excellency of his in every person, for which they are to be honoured. The titles of father, husband, teacher, and ruler, are honourable, for they are God's titles. The station wherein God has set every one, though inferiors or equals, is honourable; for they shine, most beautifully that shine in their own sphere. And there is no person on whom God has not bestowed something of his own, for which that person is to be honoured even by his superiors; esteemed inwardly in the heart, which is to be vented by a respectful outward carriage to them.

For the further opening of these words, take notice,

1. That this command, whose scope is the performance of



relative duties, is the first of the second table. In which the wisdom of God is to be adored, this command having a general influence on all the rest, so that we cannot transgress the rest but we transgress this in the first place. And it is worthy of observation, that such as bring themselves to an ill end, by murder, adultery theft, &c. ordinarily pitch on disobedience to their parents as the inlet to all these, Prov. xxx. 17.

2. That as the fourth commandment is particularly directed to superiors, so this is to inferiors; particularly because subjection and submission is that which goes worst down with the proud hearts of the children of men; and therefore God doth the more expressly require it.

3. That superiors are styled fathers and mothers. And that is, (1.) To teach superiors their duty towards their inferiors, that they owe them such tenderness and kindness as parents to their own children. Num. xi. 12. (2.) To make inferiors the more cheerfully and willingly to give due honour to them, 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15.

In discoursing from this subject I shall shew,

I. What is required in this fifth commandment.

II. What is forbidden in it.

III. The reason annexed to it.

IV. Make some improvement, as I go along.

I. I am to shew, what is required in this command. According to our Catechism, it requires 'the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations; as superiors, inferiors, or equals.'

In speaking to this I shall,

1. Take notice of God's appointment of several places and relations.

2. Consider the necessity of the performance of relative duties in general.

3. Shew the duties of the particular relations wherein we severally stand.

FIRST, I am to take notice of God's appointment of several places and relations. Observe, that a difference of places and relations amongst the children of men is of divine appointment. All are not alike. Some God will have to be

superiors, others inferiors, others equals; yea, the same persons superiors in respect of some, and inferiors in respect of others. This command supposeth this, as the eighth doth a propriety of goods. God is a God of order, not of confusion: so that the levelling design is levelled against the divine will. It serves,

1. To manifest the sovereignty of God that invests one man more than another with dominion and honour, though all are of one blood; takes one piece of clay and sets it on a throne, and sets another piece of the same on a dunghill. He himself is the King of the world, and the fountain of honour.

2. To beautify the world, God, who has made the natural body of man not all one lump, but consisting of several members, some more, some less honourable, for the beauty of the whole, has so shewed his wisdom in the political body.

3. It is necessary in this state of sin, especially for the preserving of the world, which, without rules and government in families, churches, and states, would be like a ship without a pilot amongst dangerous rocks.

*Use.* Let every one then be content with his place assigned him by the Divine Providence. Are worse than yourselves set above you? God has done it; say you Amen to your own post. And do the duty of your place and relation; and that will be your greatest honour. The moon shining by night is very beautiful, but in the day there is little beauty with her. As little is there in those who, forsaking their own place and the duties thereof, thrust themselves into that of another, and act without their proper spheres.

**SECONDLY,** Let us consider the necessity of performance of relative duties in general. Observe that the conscientious performance of relative duties is a necessary piece of true religion. The fifth commandment requireth 'the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations.' True religion consists of faith and holiness; and true holiness is made up of personal and relative holiness. Do not think that religion has no concern in thy domestic and civil affairs. All of us are in some relations, husbands, wives, children, servants, neighbours. Each of these has its own train of duties. Be thou master, servant, &c. here are thy instructions

sent down from heaven, how to carry in thy place and relation. Thou wilt say, Who is concerned how I carry to my relations? I tell you, God is concerned, and he will require it. His commands are like a man's shadow; wherever he goes, they follow him. The necessity thereof is apparent.

1. The conscientious performance of relative duties is necessary in respect of the command of God. The command for them is the first command of the second table. God, who hath placed us in these relations, binds us by his sovereign authority to perform the duties of the same. The same stamp of divine authority is on these commands, that is upon the command to pray, &c. And he will not sit with our overlooking our duty.

2. It is necessary to evidence us to be Christians indeed, no man can justly pretend to be a new creature, that does not make conscience of relative duties, 2 Cor. v. 17. Saving grace goes through all relations, like leaven in a lump, and sets men right in them. It makes the man not only a good man, but a good neighbour, husband, servant, &c. the woman a good neighbour, wife, servant, &c. For,

(1.) Relative duties are an integral part of true godliness; they are a part of the new man, Eph. iv. 24, 25. A body that wants a leg or an arm is no complete body; and a man that wants relative holiness is no complete Christian, no evangelically-complete Christian, 2 Pet. i. 7, 9.

(2.) Relative holiness is an essential part of true godliness; it cannot be without it, more than the body can live without the soul, 2 Pet. i. 7, 9. 'Shew me thy faith by thy works,' says the apostle; and so may we say, Shew me thy personal holiness by thy relative holiness, Eph. v. 9.

(3.) Relative duties are the great trying points of the work of Christianity, which, if any thing, will try what metal people are of. A man is that really which he is relatively. If there be any dirt on the hand, it will readily be found on the joints. And if there be any defect in the professor of religion, search for it in his relations, and it will readily be found in one or all of them. The pride of men's hearts makes them often very difficult; superiors, through their pride of heart, are apt to tyrannise; inferiors, through theirs, think themselves as good, and cannot comport with subjection. Every man naturally loves to be master, and seeks himself; hence there is no dutifulness to equals.



3. It is necessary as a piece of conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not a complete Christian that has not received of Christ grace for grace. We must prove our union with him by our conformity to him, 1 John ii. 6. He stood in various relations, and therein was a pattern to us. He is a loving husband to his church, Eph. v. 25. a faithful Servant to his Father ; a kind and affectionate Master to his servants ; a dutiful subject to the magistrate ; and an obedient child, Luke ii. 51.

4. It is necessary to make an useful Christian. Cumber-grounds must be cut down, Luke xiii. 7. And useless Christian is like the vine, which if it bear not fruit, is good for nothing but the fire, Ezek. xv. Now, shall we be useless in the world ? And useful we cannot be but in our several places and relations, discharging the duties of the same ; and useful we are, if we do the duties of the relations wherein we stand. How is the eye, the tongue, &c. useful ? Why if they remain in their proper place, and do their proper office : whereas, if they either be removed out of their place, or in it do not their office, they are useless. Let us make a help meet for man, said God, when he brought the first relation into the world. So that relative duties, as we stand in relation to others, in family, church, or state, are the proper orb of usefulness. They that are useful there, are useful indeed ; and they who are useless there, are useless altogether in the world.

5. It is necessary to make a straight Christian. If we will go straight in religion, we must go as it were with these two legs, personal duties and relative duties. If either of these be wanting, then our way is like ‘ the legs of the lame that are not equal,’ Prov. xxvi. 7. An unequal pulse shews a distempered body : How many such crooked professors are there, saints abroad, but devils at home ? But see Psal. cxxv. 5. ‘ As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.’

6. *Lastly*, It is necessary for personal holiness. These are like two live coals ; put them together, and they will burn ; but put them asunder, and they will both go out, 1 Pet. iii. 7. A sad evidence of this is to be seen in many, who, while they were single, gave good hopes of themselves, and had fair blossoms of religion : but being married, and making no

conscience of their duty to their relatives, all good goes from them, their spirits sour, their souls wither, and their spiritual case goes quite to wreck.

It is a common observation of such as slight relative duties, that their relatives are not in their duty to them. But though it be so, this tie is laid on them by divine authority, and so cannot be taken off that way. Must I go out of my duty, because another goes out of his duty to me? No. See 1 Pet. ii. 18. &c. It is the way to gain them to their duty, chap. iii. 1.

USE 1. Of information. This lets us see, that,

1. There is very little true religion in the world, there is so little relative holiness in it. There are two things that make this evident.

(1.) How few are there that make any conscience at all of their duty to their relatives? We may take up Micah's lamentation over the land at this day, Micah vii. 1,—6. If we look to the church, what confusions are there, with untender ministers, and unruly people? the stars losing their light, and trampled under foot with contempt. If we look to the state, magistrates abusing their authority, and people despising them and their authority too. If we look into families, what disorder is there? parents careless, children disobedient, husbands untender, wives stubborn, masters rigid, and servants unfaithful. A sad evidence of the decay of religion, that the world is so far out of course.

(2.) The relative duties that are done, how few of them are done in a right manner? To do the duty itself may please men; but God will never accept it if it is not done in a right manner. A good humour is all with many, who have no principle of a new nature. A natural affection prevails with some; love to peace makes others do their duty: and fear of their relatives puts on others to their duty; while, in the mean time they are nowise stirred up thereto from the fear and love of God; nor have they any respect to the command of God in what they do. But is that religion? will God ever accept of that as obedience to him? No, no, Rom. xiii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 6.

2. This lets us see what need all of us have to be humbled for our defects in relative duties; what need we have of the blood of Christ to wash away our guilt in these; what need we have of the Spirit of Christ to help us unto these duties.

Oh! they are not easy: nature will never comply with the work, or at best but bungle at it. We have much need to pray for the Divine assistance in this matter; as without him we can do nothing, even in these outward duties.

USE II. Of exhortation. Set yourselves to make conscience of relative duties. For motives to press this, consider,

1. This will be a notable mean of good to yourselves. He that thus lays out himself, lays up for himself indeed what the world cannot take from him. (1.) It will be an evidence of the sincerity of your obedience, if to personal holiness ye join relative holiness too, Psal. cxix. 6. (2.) It will be a great promoter of personal holiness; for he that watereth, shall be watered also himself. (3.) It will waft you in within the compass of the promise in the text.

2. The conscientious performance of relative duties is the way to do good to others. Would ye be useful for God, or useful to your relatives? then do this? This would make you a blessing like Abraham. There is nothing more convincing, and more likely to make others fall in love with religion, than this, 1 Pet. iii. 1.

3. If ye make no conscience of these duties, it will discover the rottenness and unsoundness of your hearts, Psal. cxix. 6. When God changeth the heart, he writes his laws on it, and these laws among others. And the want of this will bring in that dittay, notwithstanding all thy pretended religion, 'One thing thou lackest.'

4. The neglect of these duties, and unfaithfulness in them, does much ill to religion. The world will observe how people manage the duties of their relations; and a flaw there is a sad stumbling-block, that makes others cast at religion. That religion that tends not to the good of society, what does it avail? Suppose a professor to have a graceless neighbour, can he take a readier way to stumble him at religion, than to be an ill and unconscionable neighbour? That is a remarkable admonition, 1 Tim. vi. 1. 'Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed.' Many pride themselves in their contempt of magistrates and their authority; but I am convinced it has no small influence on the malignancy and atheism of the age, and scares many from the religion that we profess. The malicious Jews knew very well the influence that would



have; and therefore tempted our Lord with a question relative to paying tribute to Cæsar, Matth. xxii. 16, &c. But see our Lord's practice, Matth. xvii. 27.

5. God takes special notice of the conscientious performers of relative duties; for indeed those that are most observant of them are most useful for God in the world. What a noble commendation is that of Enoch, that he walked with God? Gen. v. 22. of Abraham, of whom the Lord said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment,' Gen. xviii. 17, 19; and of Sarah, 1 Pet. iii. 6. who 'obeying Abraham, calling him lord.' Nay, at the great day of judgment, it is relative duties that are pitched upon as evidences for the saints; and the neglect of these is the ground of the condemnation of the wicked. It is not what passed or did not pass betwixt God and them, but what passed betwixt their neighbours and them, upon which the sentence of absolution or condemnation is founded.

6. Ere long all these relations will be taken away, and then ye will have no more access to do a duty to them. Ordinary emergents may separate betwixt the servant and master, minister and people, one neighbour and another. Death comes and dissolves all relations, Job iii. 17, 18, 19. This dissolves the relation betwixt husband and wife, parents and children. Should we not then take that warning? Gal. vi. 10. 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith?' When they are gone, many times the neglect stings terribly.

7. Thy undutifulness that way may ruin thy relative; for by such a stroke ordinarily it is not one, but two that fall together. And if God do keep them up, yet ye do what in you lies to ruin them. The rich man in hell desires not to see his brethren. Why, dreadful is the meeting that many relatives will have one with another at that day.

8. *Lastly*, The neglect of these duties will undoubtedly ruin you, if ye get not pardon and grace to reform that neglect, Heb. xii. 14. If ye have any love to your own souls, then endeavour after this.

I offer you the following directions.

1. Keep up a sense of your own inability for relative duties, and look to the Lord for strength to perform them. People look on these but as common things, and live not by faith with respect to them, and the Lord leaves them so as they mar all. Prayer and faith in the promises are necessary to the performance of these duties.

2. Watch. Satan bends his force against this particularly, because he is in a fair way to ruin two at least at once. So relatives should join forces to resist him, and carefully watch against this subtle and malicious enemy.

3. *Lastly*, Consider ye have to do with God in that matter, and not merely with another. It is he that has set you in your several relations, and has prescribed the laws whereby ye must walk with him in them. He is your witness, and will be your Judge with respect to your behaviour in that relation, according to these laws.

THIRDLY, I come now to consider the duties of the particular relations wherein we severally stand; and they are two in general; those of superiors and inferiors, and that of equals. The former is of two sorts. There are some relations where one of the relatives has power and authority over the other; and those that import a mere preference. The first of these we may consider with respect to the family, the church, and the commonwealth.

In the family we find three relations, of superiors and inferiors, husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants, wherein one of the relatives has power and authority over the other.

I shall begin with the family-relations, and therein with the first relation that was in the world, and from which all others do proceed, viz. that of husband and wife, and so proceed to the rest in order. And we must be particular, that we may declare the whole counsel of God. I shall shew you the laws of heaven with respect to each of these relations, which if observed would make happy societies, families, &c. and when neglected keep the world in wild disorder; and these are laws by which we shall be judged.

FIRST, As for the relation betwixt husbands and wives, read Col. iii. 18, 19. 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.' The apostle here lays down the duty of married persons one to another. He

begins with the duty of the wife, as that of the children and servants, because their duty, through the subjection that is in it, is the most difficult, and being conscientiously performed, is the strongest motive to the husband, as to the parent to the children, to do his. And here we have,

1. The sum of a wife's duty to her husband. Self-submission to him, subjecting herself to him, comprehending the duty she owes to him in her heart, words, and deeds. The qualification of this submission, the only restriction of it, is *in the Lord*; that is, so as it be consistent with her duty to God. That limitation observed, it extends to every thing, Eph. v. 24. (3.) The reasonableness of this, it should not be complained of; *it is fit*, just, and equitable in respect of God's ordinance enjoining it, the infirmity of the woman as the weaker sex, and the inconveniencies arising on the refusal of it.

2. The sum of the husband's duty is love to her. This comprehends in it the whole of his duty; for love will always be active, and spread itself into the several duties he owes her, yea, and will season all these duties, and tincture them with kindness to her. The apostle comprehends all in this, both to sweeten the wife's subjection on the one hand, and to temper his authority on the other. And therefore he cautions against bitterness, and that both in heart, that he hate her not, nor coldly love her, in words, and in deeds.

Husbands and wives may not carry to one another as they list, but must be dutiful to one another, according to the word of God, as they will be accountable to God.

Here I shall shew,

1. The duties common to both husband and wife.

2. Those more peculiar to each party.

*First*, I shall shew the duties common to both husband and wife.

1. Conjugal love, Tit. ii. 4. They must love one another with a special love, not communicable to another. God's ordinance has made them one flesh, and God's law obliges them to be one heart. They must love one another more than father or mother, yea, as their own flesh, Eph. v. 28, 31. And where that love is wanting, God is dishonoured; and the society is uncomfortable. And however scarce they may be of lovely qualities, we must love them because they are ours.



2. Cohabitation, dwelling together ; which comprehends the ordinary use of the same house, bed, and board, 1 Pet. iii. 7. 1 Cor. vii. 10. This is such a necessary duty, that an obstinate refusal in either party to dwell together dissolves the marriage, 1 Cor. vii. 15. that is wilful desertion. And if a man remove to another place for a long time, and upon no bad cause, his wife is obliged to go with him, if he desire, unless there be some imminent danger, either of her body or soul ; and he is obliged to take her, if she desire. For though it belongs to the husband as the head to determine the place of their habitation, yet he cannot shake off his duty to his wife, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Gen. xii. 11.

3. Living together in peace, 1 Cor. vii. 15. We must follow peace with all men ; but there are double ties on married persons to follow peace with one another, and to watch that it be not broken. No war is so unnatural as that which is betwixt them ; and none so hopeless if they make it not up betwixt themselves. Did we see a man tearing his own flesh, or a woman beating her head against a wall, we would conclude they were mad. Yet thus it is in effect where there is no peace betwixt husband and wife. The ancient Pagan Greeks, when they cut up the wedding-sacrifice, took the gall, and with eager loathing flung it behind the altar, to shew that in wedlock all bitterness must be put far away. There is none so hopeless, if they take it not up between themselves ; for there is none to judge betwixt them but God : therefore, if they cannot clear, they should bury their controversies, yielding for peace sake. And though certainly it is most natural that the woman should first yield, yet he is a foolish man that will not sacrifice of his own right to peace, and yield, though to the weaker vessel, as Moses did to Zipporah, Exod. iv. 25, 26. Certainly whoso first yields shews most respect to God, and stands fairest for the blessing, Matth. v. 9. ‘Blessed are the peace-makers.’

4. Carefulness to please one another. The wife ought to suit herself to the will of her husband, so far as lawfully she may, 1 Cor. vii. 34. watching against what is displeasing, and doing in things lawful what she knows is pleasing, Gen. xxvii. 9. Yea, and the husband must be careful to please her too, ver. 33. It is a piece of that conjugal tenderness he owes her, not to do any thing that he knows may justly displease her, and even to humour her in things lawful and fit,

for her greater comfort ; for though he is the head, yet she is his own flesh. This would keep peace.

5. Living together not only in peace, but in love, delighting in one another's company, Eccl. ix. 9. living cheerfully and familiarly together. A careless, morose, and unconvertible humour, is opposite to the end of the state of marriage, which is the mutual comfort of the parties.

6. Honouring one another. The woman ought to honour her husband, walking under a conscientious respect to that superiority God has granted him over her, 1 Cor. xi. 7. So that she may not trample upon his character as a husband. Yea, and she must labour to walk so with others, as she may bring no dishonour to him by her indiscreet carriage, but be a glory to him by her meek and quiet conversation, 1 Pet. iii. 4. So as he is her head, she becomes a crown to that head. 'A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband,' Prov. xii. 4. The husband must also honour his wife, 1 Pet. iii. 7. both in his words and actions, shewing his esteem of her virtues, praising her when she does well, Prov. xxxi. 28. reposing trust and confidence in her as to the management of his affairs, and not keeping up the knowledge of his business from her, but communicating counsels with her, Prov. xxxi. 11. This he must do when she is worthy ; otherwise that must take place, Micah vii. 5. 'Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.' In a word, he ought to carry so respectfully to her, as to shew that he looks on her as his companion, and may gain respect to her from the rest of the family, Gen. xvi. 6. and this because she is the weaker vessel, both naturally and morally, in which respect she is more easily crushed and broken in spirit, especially by the austere and undutiful carriage of her husband.

7. Sympathising with one another in all their crosses, and griefs, and joys, whether of body or mind. Being one flesh they must shew it this way. It is a common duty we owe to all, 'to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice ;' and so both their griefs and joys should be mutual, in a special manner ; otherwise they will be as jarring strings in an instrument that mars the harmony, 1 Sam. i. 8. And they must bear with one another's infirmities, covering them with the mantle of love, Gal. vi. 2.

8. Faithfulness in respect of their bodies, communicating themselves one to another, according to the ends of marriage,

with modesty and soberness, marriage putting the body of each in the others power ; and therefore the apostle in this case forbids them to defraud one another, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Another piece of that faithfulness is keeping by one another, and not embracing a stranger, which is that horrible breach that dissolves the bond of marriage.

9. *Lastly*, A due concern for one another's soul and eternal welfare, 1 Pet. iii. 7. They must be helpful to one another in the way of the Lord, doing what they can to advance one another's eternal interest ; watching over one another, joining together in holy duties ; instructing and admonishing one another, lovingly and meekly, each one proposing to themselves the salvation of their relative, as well as their own, 1 Cor. vii. 16.

This is a weighty point, which few lay to heart. I shall lay before you these few things with respect to it.

(1.) Married persons, for this end, that they may be helpful to one another's soul's welfare, ought to walk so together as they may have in each other's consciences a testimony of their integrity, 2 Kings iv. 1. They should take heed they lay not stumbling-blocks before one another, nor carry so as to engender hard thoughts of one another that way. The testimony of God is above all, the testimony of conscience next, but the testimony of a yoke-fellow's conscience after that.

(2.) They should labour to beget and advance the fear of God in one another, to bring them to and carry them on in the truth of religion, 1 Cor. vii. 16. They are not meet helps they are only helpful for the body and temporal concerns ; for in that case the better part has no help of them. Interest as well as duty engageth to this ; for the better a man be, the better husband will he be, &c. No wonder that those who fear not God, regard not man.

(3.) They should entertain communion in prayer and addresses to the throne of grace, praying for one another, and praying with one another, 1 Pet. iii. 7. The husband should hold up his wife's case to God with his own, and the wife the case of the husband ; and help them by prayers with them and for them, which is true Christian help. They know one another's weaknesses, temptations, and difficulties, better than any one else, and therefore ought to be the more particular in this.



(4.) They should be acquainted with one another's case, and therefore inquire into the same, and observe it, that they may the better suit the help to the case, 1 Sam. i. 8. And O what a happiness is it for one to have one that is their own flesh to whom they may freely unbosom themselves! And what a sad thing is it where religious conference is not observed betwixt such parties?

(5.) They should watch over one another. This is living as being heirs together of the grace of life, 1 Pet. iii. 7. They should stir up one another to duties and good works; and happy are they who so prove monitors to one another, 2 Kings iv. 9, 10. They should warn one another of what appear sinful in their way, and so not suffer sin upon them, Eccl. iv. 9, 10. If men see a spot on their face, they will tell them of it; but spots in the conversation are most dangerous. But withal special care must be taken that there be no bitterness mixed with it, for that mars the operation; the season must be observed when it will take best, 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37; and it should be mixed with love. Yea, sometimes entreaties should be used rather than rebukes, especially from the wife to the husband, as prudence itself may teach, and may be gathered from 1 Tim. v. 1, 'Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father,' And such warnings should be kindly taken, and readily complied with, as the best evidences of love.

(6.) *Lastly*, A joint care for the religious government of the family. The one ought not to devolve that entirely on the other, but each take their share; otherwise it cannot miss to be mismanaged. Each of them owes a duty to the souls of their children and servants; and therefore should watch over them, admonish and rebuke, and stir them up to duty; and see that God be worshipped in the family, that it be not neglected for the husband's absence, or any thing else; for though the wife be the weaker vessel, she is the head of the family under her husband.

[To be continued in the Third Volume.]







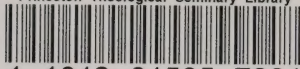








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